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GERMANY: LAST STAGE

by HANS BERGER

GERRY OBLIGES THE GOP

What's Mr. Reilly Doing in the NLRB? by VIRGINIA GARDNER

WE ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

William Rose Benet, Edwin Seaver, and Samuel Putnam argue pros and cons with Samuel Sillen's "The Challenge of Change."

NEW PATHS FOR PROFESSIONALS

by VIRGINIA SHULL

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: How America Got That Way, by *F. J. Meyers;* Evolution of a Congressman, the story of Vito Marcantonio: first of a series of Washington profiles, by *Politicus;* Here's Global War, by *Colonel T.;* William Gropper's Page.

Adult

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

THERE'S a lot to be done in these next few months, hot weather or no. The dog days won't stop the diehards in their attempts to swing the election next November. Neither will they stop straight-thinking people all over the country who are working double time to speed the war effort, and reelect Roosevelt. We know that most of NM's readers are doing just that—that's why we feel sure that a letter we received from our Washington editor, Virginia Gardner, will interest you.

"I was busy writing yesterday afternoon when there was a knock on the door and a little man stuck his head in. He said, 'Are you busy? I just wanted to talk a minute.' I barked, 'Yes, I'm very busy.' He looked a little dazed and said, 'Aren't you Miss Gardner?' 'Yes,' I said, 'but who are you?' His manner made me suspicious and I decided he was an insurance salesman. 'I'm just an NM reader from New Jersey,' he said. I urged him in confusion to come in, and asked him to sit down. Meanwhile he was going on apologetically: 'I felt so bad when Mr. Minton left for the West Coast. But now we are reading your stories and we will have his too.'

"My mind was still on an interview I'd just had and I kept wishing I could make some notes. I asked rather absently what was doing in New Jersey. But then I suddenly became aware of his voice and the words began to mean something. He was a Greek, and a businessman in a small community. 'I'm not very active,' he said. Not very active—but it developed he was up to the neck in war work, community work of a progressive sort, writing his soldier son and entertaining his friends and helping them organize Reelect Roosevelt meetings, helping in a campaign to nominate a pro-Roosevelt man to oppose a Republican in the House, etc., etc.

"He was a wonderful little man. Before I knew it almost an hour had gone, but I didn't care. As he got up to go, he pulled five ten-dollar bills out and said he wanted to give them to the magazine. 'I know you need it—no, don't thank me. I wish Mr. North didn't have to ask for it. And I don't like it when I get letters asking. It makes me feel bad—that you should have to."

We got a lift from that letter—we know how hard the job will be in the months ahead, but we know too, that our readers and others like them will be equal to it.

EDUCATION is one of the most-argued-about postwar problems—several articles on it are planned for forthcoming issues. Among them will be an analysis by Prof. Sarah R. Riedman, of Brooklyn College, president of the College Chapter of the Teachers Union, and Prof. Abraham Edel of City College, chairman of the Committee on Postwar Education of the Teachers Union. Professor Riedman and Edel deal with such questions as the so-called Hutchins School, and the role of labor in public education. Watch for it.

JOE FOSTER, our movie critic and chief impresario, has been in Hollywood these past few weeks arranging NM's second West Coast art auction. The sale will be held on Friday night, July 14, preceded by an exhibit beginning Monday, July 10, which will be open to the public all that week. The place: Tennant Galleries, 8524 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; the auction time, 8 PM. Incidentally, Foster is also doing some firsthand stories on films and personalities which will appear shortly. He will resume his movie column when he returns, the last of this month.

WE'VE had many letters in reply to Samuel Sillen's article "The Challenge of Change," published in our last literary number. This week we have given you the beginning of the discussion; it will be continued in a future issue. People everywhere were anxious to discuss the questions raised, and spoke their minds freely,—writers, artists, organizers, and other leaders. Mr. Sillen's second article will appear soon.

WE HAVE a lot to learn about baseball ourself; we only know we like it. For the last couple of weeks tuneless versions of *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* have been chasing each other around in our head, and when one of our youngest reporters and sports enthusiasts, Danny North, son of our editor, dropped in the other day, we asked him for a few impressions of the current season. The following resulted:

MY TWO FAVORITE TEAMS

Today I am going to be nine years old. My father is going to take me to a baseball game at Ebbits Field. The Dogers are playing the Cubs: I hope that the Dogers will win. I like the Dogers best in the National League, and I like the Yanks best of the American League.

I saw a game last year too. It was between the Cards and the Yanks. The Cards won. On the Dogers team I like Dixie Walker and Augie Galen the best. And on the Yankee team I like Milosivitch and Stiernweiss best. I like Kalker and Galen the best because you can always depend on them for getting on base somehow, and I like Stiernweiss and Milosivitch best because they are such a good double play combination.

THE END

It's a lot better than we could do.

M. DE A.

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GERMANY: LAST STAGE

By HANS BERGER

WHAT is going on inside Germany now that the Allies are powerfully entrenched in Normandy? The question is among the most difficult to answer. No other part of Europe is as tightly sealed by censorship and the Gestapo apparatus as is Germany proper. But despite this barrier there are a number of reports which permit sketching of the scene within Germany on the eve of the Allied invasion.

In Germany itself the pre-invasion fever ran high and one of the characteristic signs of a declining morale was the increase in the number of desertions from the army. Soldiers on leave have failed to return to their regiments. The Nazi press, for example, has carried a number of stories and articles about the "criminals in the hinterland who encourage cowardice in soldiers on furlough and even help other criminal elements in betraying comrades at the front." The big air raids, however, have greatly hampered the Gestapo in finding deserters. After every air raid there is a brisk trade in identification papers of persons killed. Many of the killed civilians are buried as "soldiers on leave" while their papers go to the deserters.

War nerves are more frayed than ever before. So reports a recent issue of the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* of Cologne. And that paper, after describing the rise in jittery feeling, even goes so far as to suggest that "all kinds of nervous restlessness can be allayed by applying cold water, either by taking cold foot or arm baths or cold showers." The *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* asks its readers to "grumble quietly if things do not go as you would like. Grumbling relieves one's feeling!" All this is symptomatic of the severe tension in Germany. And with unrest increasing everywhere, the Nazi party leadership is organizing special auxiliary police formations called *Stadtwacht* and *Landwacht* (city patrols and country patrols).

Inside the army police measures have also increased. Major General Hartenstein of the *Waffen-SS* (the army formation of the Elite Guard) has been made a member of Hitler's inner staff. Hartenstein has the job of watching morale in the barracks and replacement centers and on the trains which bring soldiers on leave back to the front. Under his command is a whole army of special police, Gestapo troops, and agents. Every unit of the army is being watched by the *Kommandoamt SS*—a spy apparatus—which makes its reports directly to its own headquarters without the knowledge of military superiors. This system, although it operates in secrecy, is well known and, as a matter of fact, the knowledge of its existence is deliberately spread. Every soldier and officer of the *Wehrmacht* knows that he is being watched, and this accounts in many cases for the fear of soldiers to surrender even in the most desperate situations.

The anti-Nazi opposition is still very much underground. It is, of course, handicapped by the tremendous Gestapo apparatus, by the dispersal of workers and by the rigid regimentation. Nevertheless, there are many signs of increased opposition activity. It cannot of course be denied that the struggle of this minority, a minority of heroic people, has so far shown no discernible results. There is as yet no evidence that it is a factor in shortening the war nor do its activities absolve Germans from the frightful guilt which they have brought upon themselves. No forthright German anti-fascist would attempt to clear his country of the guilt of the tragedies it has rained down on mankind. For the fact is that the overwhelming majority of Germans continue to follow, either passively or actively, in the footsteps of the assassins of free nations, the Nazi mass murderers.

HOWEVER, the fight of the most active German anti-fascists goes on, and though their work for obvious reasons does not receive wide publicity, their battles are increasing. Here are some typical examples derived in part not from anti-fascist sources but from the Nazi press itself.

The Nazi newspapers publicize only on rare occasions the names and occupations of Germans they have put to death. Since the Dimitrov trial there have been few public trials. Sentence and execution are generally carried out in Germany without fanfare. But for the past few months public notices of executions have begun to make frequent appearance in Nazi publications. The reason for this is clear. The Nazis are out to terrorize and arrest the mounting opposition. An analysis of thirty executions reported in the press reveals the fact that the victims of Nazi terror come from the most diverse sections of Germany: Mecklenburg, Frankfurt, Duesseldorf, Hamburg, Berlin, Wiesbaden, Mark Brandenburg, Bielefeld, Leipzig, Sassnitz—from localities in Bavaria and Hanover, the Rhineland, East Prussia, and Pomerania. The executed represent a varied assortment of occupations and social classes. Among them are women too. The majority is composed of workers and salaried employes but also includes a high official, a student, as well as merchants, musicians, engineers, managers, a physician, insurance agents, a director, a Catholic priest, landlords, and actors. All age levels are represented. The youngest is twenty and the oldest is sixty.

The judicial arguments for the determination of the sentences show that the executed persons had developed a more or less organized activity against the Nazi dictatorship. Here is one example: "Martin Michael, thirty-seven, Johann Pech, forty-seven, Siegfried Pichever and Alexander Soukup, all workingmen, have been executed for high treason committed on behalf of the Communist Party and for acts of sabotage they made possible by securing explosive materials."

Another was executed because he was "listening in to foreign broadcasts and permitted a hostile group to assemble at his home for the purpose of participating in the aforesaid act of listening." Still another had been distributing a chain letter. A few were summarily shot "because they had furnished shelter and food to enemy agents who had made a parachute descent." The manager of a firm selling mineral waters was sentenced to die "because on the occasion of a visit to an army post canteen he established contact with soldiers and indulged in defeatist speeches." August Beckmann and Gustav Horstbrink were put to death for high treason because "they held illegal gatherings and gave instruction in illegal work."

This small compilation of data about a Germany that still remains unknown makes it apparent that systematic anti-fascist activity is being pursued. More about this activity is learned from reports of the underground press and especially from the Swiss newspapers, through which the experiences of foreign workers and prisoners of war are given publicity. Belgian and French underground papers have carried reports of the existence of illegal Communist publications.

The well-informed Swiss newspaper *St. Galler Tageblatt* of March 25, 1944, published an article on the German underground movement from which I quote the following: "A few years ago Heinrich Himmler declared prophetically that in the event of war there will be a domestic

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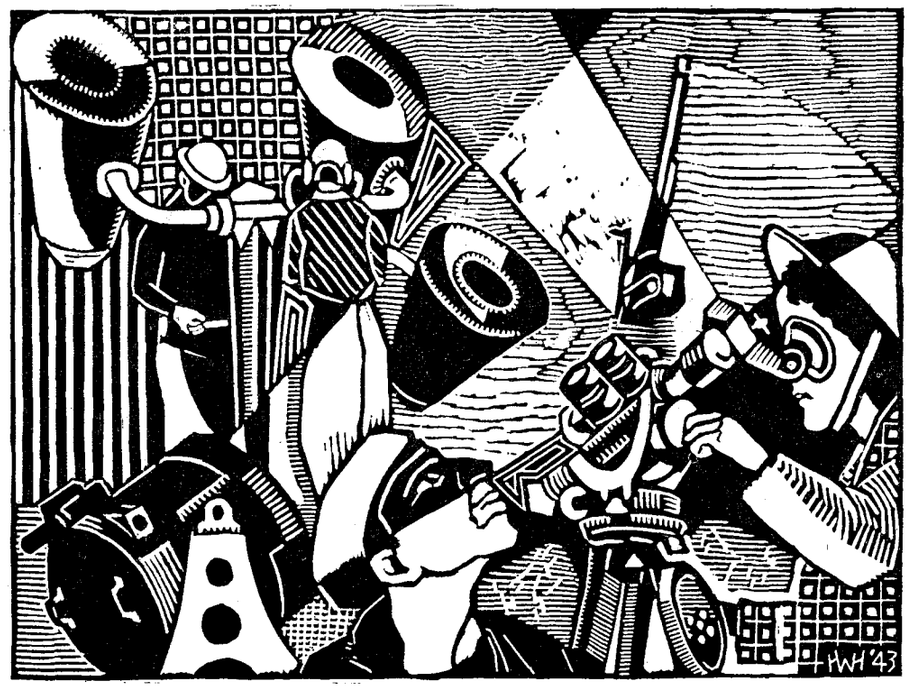

Helen West Heller

theater of operations. This underground war has been waged for a long period and with varying successes. With the German defeats on the Eastern Front and the changes that have taken place in Italy this internal war of Germany has taken a sharper turn. At present it is headed by more numerous, more experienced, and trained forces that compel the Nazis to employ ever more rigorous methods of repression. . . . The German resistance movement has gained intimate knowledge of the opposition forces and their tactics either as soldiers in the armies of occupation, as civil service officials in the occupied territories or from the accounts of foreign workers with whom they worked side by side in the German factories. This proves how wise it was on the part of these foreign fighters for freedom to avoid a blind chauvinistic and indiscriminate hatred toward every German and to try instead to influence them politically."

THE same newspaper also pictures the existence of an illegal and well-organized movement of German deserters whose number, toward the end of 1943, had been estimated by the Nazis at 65,000. It states: "These desertions were primarily a spontaneous reaction of people who preferred the risk of an underground life to the certain horrors of the trenches in the Soviet Union. They showed themselves courageous enough to organize small, independent groups and to proclaim by agitation and sabotage their hostility to the senseless continuance of the war. This resistance has now acquired a pronounced political character . . . due either to a higher political maturity or because a bond has been established between the old and the new opposition forces. The struggle against the war has become endowed with a clear political line that has crystallized as the fight for a new Germany."

A French officer who spent three years in Germany as a prisoner of war before he escaped from a concentration camp in East Prussia described his experiences in the *St. Galler Tageblatt* of Feb. 2, 1944, as follows: "The French resistance movement in Germany is perhaps better and more solidly organized than at home. . . . The task before us was complicated and difficult. It was necessary to find ways of establishing connections between the many concentration camps and to find contact with the homeland and with Algiers. This would obviously have been impossible had we not been in a position to rely on the active assistance of German soldiers and workers. . . . We left many good friends among the Germans. . . ."

The officer further describes how he was able to make his escape from camp with the aid of German friends. He says: "I remained in Koenigsberg for two months, provided with money, civilian clothes and a new identification card. During this stay I had the opportunity of a closer acquaintance with conditions in Germany. The day-to-day life in that country is hard and tragic, but most tragic of all, in my opinion, is the terrible fear of each other among the Germans. Though my German friends talked to me frankly and freely, they immediately shut up and became distrustful and apprehensive when they met me in the company of other Germans."

The *Weltwoche*, which is published in Zurich, says the following in its issue of Jan. 7, 1944: "The attempts of the German government to stuff the German workers with the ideology of the master race so they would look down on the foreign worker [slave labor imported from occupied countries] enjoyed a temporary success, but for the most part it met with failure. The German armament workers gave daily evidence of their friendly attitude toward their foreign co-workers, who lived under conditions inferior to their own. This expressed itself at first in the gift of cigarettes, followed by the offer of presents of food and finally German workers furnished deserters from forced labor camps and escaped prisoners of war with technical and financial assistance. They supply them with ration cards, civilian clothes, and secret shelter."

The leaders of the French underground were thoroughly convinced that they had allies inside Germany and issued appropriate instructions to their adherents. The French resistance movement published a special handbook in French for its compatriots who are at forced labor in Germany. The following is a quotation from the book: "There are two kinds of Germans. In the first place there are those who are enemies, either because they support the Hitler regime and the Gestapo or because they accept both without inner resistance. All methods are permissible in dealing with such people. There is, however, another type of German with whom you must establish contact. He is, like yourself, a victim of Hitler. Among such Germans there exists the possibility of splendid work, regardless of whether they are actually members of Communist, Catholic, or Social Democratic anti-Nazi organizations. It is your duty to bring renewed hope to these Germans and to assist them in sabotage and political activity. We must bring them support and accept it from them. . . . Trust us that through successful sabotage and not by diligent labor will Frenchmen gain the respect and sympathy of the Germans."

IT WOULD be possible to cite scores of other examples from the various illegal newspapers of other countries as well as from other sources. But one report is especially worth mentioning. The Danish underground paper *Frye Danske* (*The Free Dane*) carried the news that at the beginning of this year a strike involving 30,000 workers broke out in the Mark Brandenburg. The Gestapo was able to break this strike only after a ten-day battle during which a number of workers were shot. The slogans of the strikers were "Immediate Armistice" and "Peace."

New underground papers have also been appearing in several German cities. These papers use the "clothes" of well-known old papers which had stopped publishing for lack of newsprint, printing materials, or because the Nazis had taken away their paper supply. The inhabitants of Frankfurt and Magdeburg found men at street

(*Continued on page* 21)

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EVOLUTION OF A CONGRESSMAN

By POLITICUS

This is the first of a series of Washington profiles.

"WE DON'T want Marcantonio tellin' us how to run our lives. We're goin' to see that the 'nigger' gets to vote, just as soon as he proves he can make a good citizen." The southern politician I was talking to paused. "By the way, what is this Marcantonio like?"

Whoever the visiting fireman in Washington, he is curious about Marcantonio. There are those who are deferential and respectful and full of venom, particularly for his effective work in fighting the poll tax. And there are others such as the Hollywood writer who wanted to meet him because "some day I might want to do a film about a real mass leader who at the same time—well, what is he at the same time—a machine politician?" I bristled indignantly at the phrase. Well, he persisted, what did I know about him? What made a guy like that operate? Was it ambition?

Certainly Vito Marcantonio is not free of ambition. But ambition doesn't account for a man's standing up against the abuse Marcantonio has taken for periods of years over various issues. It's true that in 1944 events are catching up with him. Years ago when the newspaper columnists disapproved of mentioning it despite our country's official policy, he spoke out for a second front on the floor of Congress, and for a "secundo frente" in his district. Now we have one. He spoke out consistently against Martin Dies, and was the first to reveal that Dies' "yellow book" of 1942, on the Japanese, was material stolen directly from an obscure little weekly on the Pacific Coast. Today Dies has been excoriated in his home district and has decided to retire from Congress. Alone among all the public officials of Italian descent, Marcantonio refused to support the so-called Italian Red Cross at the time of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. When other officials, tempted by newspaper ballyhoo, spoke at a Madison Square Garden meeting in behalf of this outfit, Marcantonio refused. So anxious was he to make it pointed, that he returned to New York and appeared prominently elsewhere so that no one could say he was kept away by business in Washington. There is nothing half-hearted about Marcantonio. He took his fight to educate the Italian people on Italian fascism right into his district.

"How about it, Marc?" I asked him. "Are you a machine politician?"

"Well," he said, with that infrequent but beautiful smile of his transforming a face which is apt to appear sad or stern in repose, "if you mean have I an organization, sure, and it's a darned good one. First of all," he said, growing serious, "we have a mass following. But we're up against trickery and machinations. The people have to have an organization to protect their political interests. And we've got it."

Even though the position he took on the Ethiopian war and Italian fascism cost him his election in 1936, his "boys" stuck by him. But unlike many who after a defeat mend their ways and go conservative, or inveigh bitterly against labor or Roosevelt for not getting them reelected, Marc set about quietly to rectify matters. He did this in the only way he operates. He kept intact his "machine," if you want to call his organization that. But he set it to work running and distributing an educational newspaper. In it he explained the issues involved in Mussolini's war on the Ethiopian people. Here was a case in which his people's natural sympathies would have been against making war on this defenseless black people. But the Italian fascists had sent over Pietro Carbonelli as a publicist. He fed the poison and the innocents in Marc's district had swallowed it. Carbonelli was a prototype of Lawrence Dennis, whom the government calls the brains or the Alfred Rosenberg of the twenty-nine defendants in the Nazi plot trial. Carbonelli told them that Mussolini wasn't fighting poor Ethiopians but British imperialism. Good Italian mothers took off their gold wedding rings and offered them to Mussolini. Generoso Pope, the pro-fascist publisher, organized a meeting in Marc's own district. Carbonelli's lieutenants threatened the father of one of Marc's editors with the castor oil treatment which Il Duce found so effective. But the little bi-weekly newspaper, *Voice of the People*, kept blasting away, "beating hell out of the fascists," as Marc says, "and even going in for some collateral attacks on the individual fascists in the district and showing them up as usurers." By 1940 the fascists' club of 2,000 had gone out of business, thanks to Marcantonio's drubbing.

BY 1938 Marc had won many to his anti-fascist banner. Those who in '36 had joined in singing "Giovanezza," Mussolini's hymn, now joined Marc's "boys" in drowning it out as the Mussolini faithful met in the Circolo Mario Morgantini, just across the street from the LaGuardia Club, Marcantonio's headquarters in East Harlem. Leading the fascists in song was a German choral group. The inharmonious duet ended only when police arrived on the scene.

Marcantonio was returned to Congress in 1938 and has been there ever since. Today the sons of the men and women who deserted Generoso Pope and returned Marc to Congress, are part of our liberating Army in Italy and France. Mussolini is done for, Badoglio is out, a six-party coalition government represents the people. Marc doesn't have to explain much this year.

Marcantonio's district in New York, in East Harlem, is not a district, or even a city; it is a world. It contains Italians, Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Irish, Jews from southern Europe, with Greeks and other nationalities in fewer numbers. It is not an accident that the one Congressman who won the Republican, Democratic, and American Labor Party primaries (in 1942) comes from this particular district. A district so essentially American would have to produce a Marcantonio sooner or later.

But how did it actually happen? And how catch him long enough to find out? For three weeks he could not be caught. As soon as Congress adjourned at the end of each day, Miss "Johnny" Johnston, Marc's secretary, rushed him out to the airport in her car. He went to New York, consulted on what had to be done next day in his campaign, made a couple of speeches on street corners or in halls, and after a few hours' sleep was on his way back to Washington in a plane. For campaign or no, Marc maintains his virtually perfect attendance record. Rarely has he missed a vote on any issue of importance in his four terms in the House. On the first evening in three weeks when he stayed over in Washington, and despite the disapproving looks of Johnny and his Negro lawyer-secretary, John Davis, I managed to see the Congressman.

Though his shoulders are broad, Marcantonio is not a sturdy man, but a rather slight figure. I expected to see a haggard, or at least weary, Congressman. "Marc," fussed Johnny, the only secretary on the Hill to address her boss without a prefix, "is worn out." But he appeared fresh and

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snappy to me. He actually thrives on such strenuous campaigning. When he isn't working so hard he gets into all sorts of projects such as reading the complete works of Shakespeare. Or he gets restive and begins playing practical jokes. He is a man of great personal dignity, and he is never suspected as the originator of these jokes, but Johnny dreads these periods, fearing he will be found out. He has an enormous vitality, in contrast to his frail appearance. His voice has resonance and a richness of timbre. He has an expressive, sensitive face, the face of an artist or one an artist would like to draw. It is rather a shock, then, to hear out of that mobile mouth, when he is in the mood to talk out of the side of it, the "dese" and "dose" of his childhood. But when he wishes he can deliver, impromptu, a flood of beautifully chosen words pronounced with impeccably pure inflection.

Marc was born on East 112th St. near First Avenue, in Manhattan, four blocks from where he now lives, the son of an Italian mother who is living, and a carpenter who was born in this country, the son of a carpenter. Marc's father became a small contractor. In some years they had enough and in some pickings were slim. Marc was as wild as the other kids at PS 85, but when William C. Hannig—"he's now a member of the Board of Examiners and a reactionary, but he was a fine principal"—came to the school and installed a police system among the kids, he made Marc police chief. He also gave the school a name, and let them use the school yard for sports. They quit beating up their teachers and began to take pride in the school. But only two went to high school, and the other one dropped out when he got his working papers—at the age of fourteen.

IN THOSE early years the East river played a big part in young Vito's life. In later years he reminded the people of his district how it used to feel when the boys, having no place else to swim, would choose lots as to who would go in first to break the scum.

This was after the river had been cleaned up, the stench eliminated by a new garbage disposal system, dump and junk yards done away with—"by the mayor," as Marcantonio makes clear. The realty interests ogled the improvement and decided to try to wrest it from the people who had lived there when it was dirty and smelled bad. They would build another Tudor City there. Marcantonio rallied the people behind the slogan, "Save the river for the people," organizing the Harlem Legislative Conference, with the result that a $3,500,000 school was built on the realtors' longed-for site at 116th St., and a housing project where Negro and white live in harmony, 1,100 families of them, at the other—the southern—end of the district. Heading the school was Dr. Leonard Cavello, who made it a community project. It is open nights for adults and pupils, whites and Negroes. "And at the head of the student body is a Negro."

Marc tells this story with great feeling and satisfaction. He dwells over every detail lovingly. Dr. Cavello, now his next-door neighbor, is an old friend. At DeWitt Clinton high school, Marc was one of the eighteen Italians among 3,000 pupils to whom Cavello acted as faculty adviser. They organized the Circolo Italiano, gave plays, coached Italian boys in schools all over Little Italy downtown and Little Italy in East Harlem, meeting in various settlement houses, and even taught citizenship to parents at night. "It was all Cavello's ideas," the Congressman says generously. But he himself was chief executive, he acted as business manager for ticket sales, which were prodigious, and he even ventured once onto the stage. It just happened that on the night they gave one of Pirandello's plays, Pirandello was in this country and walked in during the play—and Marc forgot his lines. "But I was a judge, and I slipped a copy of my lines in a book on the bench, and I got by." Here you see the same practical streak in our Congressman which explains his excellence as a parliamentarian. Actually few, if any, in the House are his superiors as such. The poll tax southerners who have maintained a stranglehold on House procedure have at last met their match in parliamentarianism. It was Marcantonio's fast foot-work which saved FEPC recently. On the first teller vote it lost in the House. He threatened to ask for a record vote, which would have exposed the hand of the Republicans. Many switched and the next teller vote was 123 to 119 for FEPC.

In New York University law school in Washington Square, Marc became a close friend of Edward Corsi, now commissioner of industrial relations under Governor Dewey, "and a fine commissioner." Together they organized a tenants' league in East Harlem when landlords began raising rents. Tenants could demand jury trials in eviction cases. The boys coached them in their defense and they won almost every case. The rent-hike was stopped. "Right then and there I realized there had to be political action on the part of the people to protect their rights. Political action." He repeated the words impressively.

Then he suddenly laughed. "And after all that," he said sheepishly, "they recognized my importance at Haarlem House, the settlement house where we'd held our meetings. They made me a sort of policeman and put me in charge of the lobby to keep order." It was there he met his wife, Miriam Sanders, then fresh out of college and not long out of her native New Hampshire. She was a social worker there and became head worker—and still is.

During this period Marcantonio met Fiorello H. LaGuardia and in 1924, when he bolted the Republican party and ran on the LaFollette ticket, Marc went out campaigning with him. He would hold the crowd on a street corner until LaGuardia arrived. Thus they'd give four or five speeches a night. LaGuardia beat both the Republican and Democratic candidates, and Marc managed every one of his campaigns thereafter. In 1929, it was Marc's idea the LaGuardia Club be founded. He was made president and reelected each year. "Other politicians called us Gibonis. This was a word of derision. Sometimes it was 'the Gibs.' 'We'll show them what the Gibonis can do,' we said, and we began calling ourselves the Gibonis." I'm sure Westbrook Pegler would have been puzzled at the tenderness with which Marcantonio lingered over the name, Giboni. "Pegler heard about the Gibonis, it's true," said Marc, "and he wrote at length about this secret society. We weren't any secret society, of course. A lot of the members were college boys, just kids. We fought hard, and many of them are now in the New York City administration."

"IN 1938 in the middle of my campaign there began what I proved later to be carefully instigated fighting among Puerto Rican and Italian kids," Marc said. "Then the parents became involved. I immediately called a meeting—at the Odd Fellows Hall—and I got representatives of various organizations among both groups, I got Protestant ministers and Catholic priests, to attend. We agreed there should be no racial friction. Parents agreed to firmly discipline boys if they indulged in this street fighting. Those people walked out of there that night resolved on unity, and I've never seen people unite as they did. Within a week LaGuardia withdrew the mounted police which the city had been forced to call out. There have never been any outbreaks in the district since then. No one's had the nerve to try to foment any. I tell you, though, I was thrilled—" he said, looking off in the distance, his voice dropping, that rare and disarming Marcantonio smile appearing. "It showed that the people can unite for their own benefit despite race, color, or creed. It was democracy at work." He stopped, suddenly embarrassed. He is essentially a shy man, disinclined to show feeling. He began to rustle papers on his desk busily. I got the hint. It was like a sledgehammer in its delicacy.

"Thanks, Marc," I said, getting up. "I think I have a good story."

"Of course you have," he growled. "Now get the hell out of here." I got. As I walked along the corridor looking out into the well of the old House Office Building—his office is on the top floor—I noticed all the offices were dark. No one but a working fool like Marc stays in his office until 7:30 at night in Washington. But there's only one Marc in the House, and it's a good thing he works overtime.

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GERRY OBLIGES THE GOP

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

GERARD REILLY, member of the National Labor Relations Board, has the doubtful distinction of having been characterized in a recent resolution of the CIO executive officers as the man responsible for a series of NLRB decisions and rulings that "reflect a retreat from the basic policies and principles underlying the National Labor Relations Act and actually deprive the workers of the nation of the fundamental rights which the Act was intended to guarantee to them." The number of apologetic words issuing from Reilly's lips these days before Congressional committees is prodigious. Up to this point he has been allowed to burble forth freely in the way which has made him such a social success with various committees, particularly their Republican and anti-labor Democratic members. Now, however, the garrulous Gerry has eaten some of his words.

In Mr. Reilly's testimony before the House committee investigating the Montgomery Ward seizure, by snide inferences he actually questioned the power of the President to seize the corporation's Chicago properties. He also had the gall to suggest Congress make into law a proposal the NLRB had supposedly put on the shelf. According to reliable labor sources, he was summoned to the White House the next day by Presidential advisers.

At any rate, when the hearings of the House committee are published, one particular passage in Reilly's testimony will not be there. There is an old Washington custom which enables witnesses to say one thing before Congressional committees and another in print. Transcripts of testimony regularly are sent to witnesses for little rewrite jobs. Thus when I went to the committee rooms to see the transcript, I was told by a gracious lady there that "all the copies have been sent out for the witnesses to change their testimony." Some had, however, been returned to the office of Chairman Ramspeck (Democratic whip, from Georgia), and there I read Reilly's testimony as edited by Reilly.

Reilly had volunteered to the committee his opinion that the Montgomery Ward case had given rise to "the most explosive issue" in labor the administration had faced in some time. This "issue" he sees as the need to give employers (page Mr. Avery) a chance to petition the NLRB for an election among their employes if they have a "reasonable doubt" that the certified union does not have a majority. Up to this time employers have had this right only when two unions claimed a majority. A proposed regulation would enable the employer to file a petition within five days after the War Labor Board accepts jurisdiction in a case. The WLB could do nothing pending action by the NLRB.

Having been trounced severely by labor spokesmen in a hearing on the proposed regulation before the NLRB, Reilly told the House committee that labor opposed it, and added: "The problem, as you see, is not unrelated to the subject matter of the case before you. Therefore, if the purpose of the investigation is to make certain recommendations to Congress, it might very well be that the committee would see fit to examine further into this problem."

In his corrected version, however, Reilly crossed out the last sentence, and wrote in over the crossed-out words: "and since the committee is examining all phases of the question, I wished you to know that we are addressing ourselves to the problem with the hope of finding a solution at an early date."

AS USUAL, under questioning by the Republicans on the committee, in this case Charles H. Elston of Ohio and Carl T. Curtis of Nebraska, Reilly performed aptly. When Elston asked why there ever was a rule allowing only the union to request a petition for election, Reilly, who might have answered that the Wagner act was made for the protection and benefit of workers and not to give employers a weapon against labor, said, "I think the real reason was this: an employer in peacetime was not hurt by not having that right."

And Curtis, after Reilly had obliged by posing the question of whether Montgomery Ward was in fact a war plant, quoted the law defining the President's power to seize, and asked, "Ward's was not any such plant in Chicago, was it?" To which Reilly demurely replied: "I am familiar with the legal position taken by the War

"Violinist," by Sol Wilson.

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Labor Board, and by the Attorney General, but I have not examined it independently and I would much prefer that you ask that question of the officials who have studied it."

But Chairman Ramspeck was unwilling that the complete testimony of this government official be used to discredit the government's action in the Montgomery Ward case. Some of his questions and Reilly's suddenly monosyllabic replies run like this:

Q. Montgomery Ward never carried out the order of the WLB at all in this case, did they? A. No.

Q. And that brought about the strike? A. That was the immediate cause.

After forcing Reilly to admit that the employes did comply with the WLB order, which required them to petition for an election but was contingent on the company's maintaining the status quo, he asked, "And it was not maintained?" "No," said Reilly. Reilly admitted, too, that the WLB order did not require Ward's to sign a new contract. Q. Then there could have been no violation of the NLRA in simply maintaining the status quo? A. That is correct.

This was after reams of testimony on Reilly's part regarding some hypothetical employes and the "question whether they would have any rights under the Labor Relations Act if fired." He had pictured a parley between NLRB and WLB public members in Economic Stabilizer Vinson's office a week before the President's seizure order was issued, as being concerned chiefly with this topic. WLB officials had said the union would not press its right to have employes who failed to remain in the union fired, during government operation of the plant. ". . . consequently we advised Vinson and the Bureau of the Budget later that day that we didn't feel that the proposed Executive Order would raise any conflict with the LRA."

"As a matter of fact," Ramspeck asked, "nobody has any authority to determine the question of seizure except the President of the United States, has he?" Reilly replied: "No, with the advice of the Attorney General."

It is said by some that Reilly is ambitious to step into a court of appeals judgeship that is open, and others think he is building a record on which he could win over reactionary employers if he runs for Congress from Massachusetts. He is close to Sen. David Walsh, who probably will retire next year, and it is even possible he may run for the Senate.

THERE is a disarming boyishness about "Gerry" Reilly's appearance. Of slight build, he has a rosy-cheeked quality in spite of his graying hair. When I asked him whether or not he acted without his fellow members' knowledge when he testified, he appeared so happily innocent as he launched into an involved answer that it was impossible to entertain any harsh thoughts about his motives. It took several questions, however, to elicit the definite information that he had invited Congress to legislate (even if he did delete it in the transcript) without the prior knowledge of Chairman Harry Millis of the NLRB or the other member, John N. Houston. He "just didn't have time" to clear with them in advance on his testimony, but he did have time to get the NLRB publicity department to run off mimeographed copies of his statement to make available for the press.

"Has anyone accused you of defending Sewell Avery?" I asked him.

Reilly lapsed into an initial simper, then quickly became his usual legalistic objective self. If he was insulted he rose above it. He has long delicate fingers and he gesticulated freely as the words flowed. He explained some difference between Avery's point of view, which he called "broad," and his own. Avery held even maintenance of membership was in violation of the Wagner act unless voluntary, he said. I took it Reilly didn't go that far.

Here is what Avery wrote the President as his reason for refusing to put maintenance of membership into effect pending an election of his employes. To grant it beforehand, he said, "would not only violate the employes' fundamental liberty of free choice, but it would also permit the union to demand the discharge of all the employes who have resigned from the union since December 8 (when the previous contract expired). Compliance with the Board's order would thus make a mockery of the democratic right of employes to choose their bargaining agents freely and without interference."

Here is what Reilly told me: he was concerned with the employes' rights, not the employers'. These were persons who, should they want to drop out of the union, might be fired while the government was operating the plant if the union chose to exercise its right under the maintenance of membership clause. Then, he said, if the union had lost the election, those workers could have claimed they were illegally discharged. (A later search failed to reveal any such case acted on by the NLRB when the maintenance clause had been ordered continued by the WLB.) I asked Reilly if these weren't mighty few, these hypothetical employes whose rights he was worrying about and in whose name Avery saw fit to defy the government.

"One of the things to emphasize about the Act is freedom of choice of the workers. If there is no way of employes getting an election, their rights are frustrated," said Reilly. "In peacetime, they can drop out of a union if they find it's getting under undemocratic control, but now they can't."

"Would you advise workers to drop out of unions if they want them to be more democratic, then?" "Oh no," he said quickly, "don't say that, but it is true those unions which come under interstate commerce and the NLRA are cleaner, more democratic. Racketeering," he said chattily, "is mostly in those that don't—the building trades, musicians and so on."

"Isn't that rather a slur on the WLB, which has jurisdiction over all unions now in anything affecting the prosecution of the war?"

"Oh, no, the WLB doesn't have power to police unions, while we do," he replied. But a check showed WLB decisions which did require democratization of unions, while I failed to dig up any such NLRB cases.

Despite his cracks about "racketeering" Reilly worked closely with the building trades unions when he was Secretary of Labor Perkins' chief counsel, and has been a behind-the-scenes lobbyist for renewal of the Frey rider to the NLRB appropriations act, and latterly for a substitute which would allow company unions' contracts to run their course without any interference by the NLRB. (The Frey rider, sponsored by John P. Frey of the AFL and passed by Congress last year, prohibited the use of NLRB funds to set aside labor contracts, no matter how phoney, that have been in force three months.)

A member of the NLRB who makes deals with AFL reactionaries to support their riders if they support NLRB appropirations, as he did, is no more strange than one who testified, as Reilly did when questioned about how Section 8 of the Smith-Connally act was working out (this was the section singled out by President Roosevelt as one which would encourage strikes when he vetoed the bill): ". . . by focusing attention on these disputes, it possibly does serve to expedite action by the appropriate labor board." He said, "I think also it is in line with the general philosophy of the Wagner Act to give employes the vote on so critical an issue."

AT THE public hearing on the proposed regulation allowing employers to petition for NLRB elections Attorney Herbert S. Thatcher of the AFL said that AFL affiliates were opposed to it one hundred percent. The Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen opposed it, and the National Federation of Telephone Workers and the United Mine Workers. Chief Counsel Lee Pressman of the CIO not only opposed it, but did a job on Mr. Reilly in the public hearing unprecedented in board history. He said that for six years the National Association of Manufacturers, whose spokesman there favored the proposal, had been trying to get such a regulation passed by Congress. Failing that, the NAM had found a friendlier reception in the Board, said Pressman. Looking directly at Reilly, although not mentioning him by name, Pressman asked if the Board was made up of swivel chair bureaucrats living in an ivory tower, or respon-

(*Continued on page 21*)

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HOW AMERICA GOT THAT WAY

By F. J. MEYERS

They tried to fit you with an English song
And clip your speech into the English tale.
But, even from the first, the words went wrong,
The catbird pecked away the nightingale.

The homesick men begot high-cheekboned things
Whose wit was whittled with a different sound
And Thames and all the rivers of the kings
Ran into Mississippi and were drowned.
—*Stephen Vincent Benét.*

THE American Revolution of 1776 did not of itself determine the character of our country and its subsequent history. But an understanding of the circumstances which gave rise to it and the particular form it took is the beginning of any understanding of America. The general laws of social development are the indispensable guide to progressive action; but knowledge of those laws remains hollow and academic without an understanding of the peculiar circumstances of the national society in which they act. Therefore, the American democrat cannot return too often to a consideration of the origins of American democracy. These notes do not pretend to exhaustiveness in this direction or to the establishment of final conclusions. They are merely considerations of some of the special factors in our history and the effect of these factors today.

The striking fact is that, alone among the great nations of the earth, the birth of our nation was a democratic birth. It is this perhaps more than anything else which has given to the American people those peculiarities of national character which in the modern epoch of democratic struggle have been the despair alike of reactionary and doctrinaire "leftist."

It is true that the American Revolution was the work of men whose ideas—indeed in many cases whose very lives—were but little removed from Europe. The Declaration of Independence was inspired by the democratic revolutionary thought of Europe. It was part of the same movement which in England and France brought forth the two hundred years of democratic development beginning with the English revolutions of the seventeenth century. Decisively, however, it differed from the European revolutions, and the development which ensued from it differed from the development in Europe. The English, the French, and the American revolutions alike expressed the human struggle for freedom, for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—a struggle grounded on the only economic basis the technological, economic, and social conditions of the time made possible, the guarantee of private ownership of the means of production against feudal and regal monopoly. But only in America did circumstances make possible that economic guarantee for the majority of the population.

In Europe, as in America, the struggle was conducted by an alliance of classes, primarily between the developing commercial capitalists and the agrarian population, whether small farmers, tenants, or serfs seeking freedom and land. There were other elements in this alliance—the artisan and laborer city population, product of the decaying guild system, and at times even sections of the landowners such as the squirearchy in England and the slave-owners in America. But the decisive classes of the alliance were the capitalists and the farmers. In common they fought for political democracy and the destruction of feudal privilege. In common they demanded the guarantee of private ownership of the wherewithal to produce; the freedom of the market, which was indispensable to the development of their production; the freedom from onerous feudal and regal dues, taxes, and tithes. The parallels are sometimes amazing: Hampden and the "ship money" in the days of Charles I; Samuel Adams and the tea tax in the days of

"Liberty Bell," by Edith Glaser.

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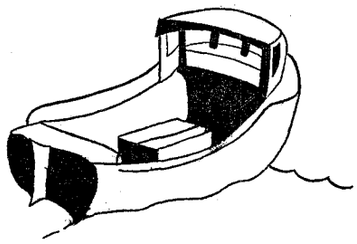
George III. The Great Remonstrance, the Declaration of Independence, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, in England, America, and France, with all their differences, bear the marks of a common birth.

But, despite the common basis of the European and American movements, when we examine what actually happened here and there, we find a great divergence. On both sides of the Atlantic, the common interests of the two basic sections of the revolutionary alliance did not wipe out the clash between their special interests. With the destruction of the power against which they fought, the capitalist wing moved toward a new monopoly, new domination of the political life of the nation, within the more or less democratic forms established. They stretched out with their financial power to seize from their popular allies the economic fruits of victory, the land—directly or indirectly, through enclosure, taxation, or speculation. The reactions of Charles II's Restoration and again of the late eighteenth century in England, of the Napoleonic Empire and the Bourbon Restoration in France, were the results of this process. Looking about for allies for support in their struggle against the people, whose blood had defeated the old regime, the new commercial oligarchy in England and France made a peace, a compromise, with their old enemies, the remnants of the feudal aristocracy. They took over with minor changes the already existing state apparatus of oppressive power, and to a large degree accepted the old aristocrats as their representatives, or junior partners, allowing them the privilege of governing *so long as they helped and did not hinder the development of bourgeois economic power.* Positions won by the people were partly lost, and fought for and won again, and lost again and won through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, until under new conditions the struggle merged with the new liberation movement of labor.

To say that this development was different in America is by no means to say that it was completely won once for all when Cornwallis' troops marched out of Yorktown under the guns of the Continental Army and the French fleet. But there is a difference, and a profound one. The struggle that began with the Revolution and continued with the democratic movements of Jefferson and Jackson was able to register gains more permanent and more fundamental than did the European democratic revolution primarily because of two conditions which existed in America but did not exist in Europe.

In the first place, feudal or semi-feudal relations were never established in most of America. And even before the Revolution, democratic political institutions had grown up in a two hundred year guerrilla battle with the prerogative of the Crown—colonial legislatures against royal governors, smugglers against tax collectors, frontiersmen against the military agents of the royal fur trade monopoly. The struggle in America was directed primarily against a restrictive oppression in the form of foreign control, not native feudalism. The defeat of the British armed power in America was the final and decisive defeat of the old regime. Except in the South, whatever of feudalism had become nativized in America was destroyed.



Secondly, the vast extent of untapped land gave to the people a potential reserve of economic power which bred a constantly increasing population of free small landowners.

Thus, when in the years after the conclusion of the War of Independence the commercial capitalists of America, through the Federalist Party, attempted to stifle the development of democracy and seize political and economic power for themselves, they could find no powerful allies within the country. Even the interests of the Southern slave-owners as a class tended to come into conflict with those of the capitalists; and only a small section of the wealthiest slave-owners were as yet sufficiently removed from the circumstances of the small free farmer to make common cause with the merchant oligarchy against the people.

Nor was there a time-hallowed and powerfully entrenched state apparatus to be taken over and utilized for the suppression of the people. The old courts, the old army, were gone with the end of British rule. Much of the old law had been transformed by the revolutionary colonial legislatures. The state militias, made up of the people, were the most powerful military force in the country. Hamilton's attempt to found a national army of the eighteenth century European type, made up of rag-tag and bobtail, picked up from the gutters, loyal only to their paymaster, to be used against the people, came to nothing. During the crisis of the disputed election of 1800 Jefferson was never for a moment in doubt that if the Federalists tried to steal the election by force of arms, the militias of Pennsylvania and Virginia would have made short work of them.

It took long and continued struggle, but the people, under the leadership of men like Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, firmly established the democratic political system, a state in which the capitalist class had to share power not only with the slave-owners of the South but—and this is something unique in the history of the period—with the representatives of the mass of the people. A measure of national unity was achieved and preserved, for the Jeffersonian social system gave wide scope to the economic development of capitalism in a democratic manner, and the great West simultaneously formed a basis for the economic expansion of the small farmers, as well as the slaveholders.

In these years, excepting always the position of the Negro slaves, by and large basic democratic rights had been won by the mass of the people. With it there developed a society whose democratic social habits and way of thinking were to every European traveler the astounding and outstanding characteristic of the United States.

Even with the beginning of the development of industry in the first half of the nineteenth century, the continued existence of free land as an escape for workers from exploitation and the building of the labor force from a constant stream of immigration served to prevent the crystallization of a propertyless working class and the chronic class struggle in the cities which drove the European bourgeoisie of the 1840's into reaction.

It was rather from the slave and cotton South (where the development of slavery into a powerful economic force was crushing the freedom the white farmers had achieved and reducing them to a level little different from that of the Negro people) that the first serious threat to the victories of the revolution arose. The slave-owners, not content with tyrannical domination of the South, made a powerful bid for the control of the whole nation and the suppression of the democratic liberties of North and West as well. They raised up against themselves a new democratic alliance of industrial capitalists and farmers, together with the young forces of labor and their own slaves. It was with clear understanding that the Republican Party of 1860, formed as the political organization for the defense of the republic, took over the name and the tradition of Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans. This was no twisting of the specific policies of Jefferson, developed to meet a particular situation in his time, to fit the needs of reaction in a different era, such as we see from the now reactionary national leadership of the Republican Party and the "steal-the-election" "Jeffersonian Democrats" today. It was the recognition of the fundamental similarity of their aims to his, of the fact that the struggle for the preservation of the democratic Union against the slave-owners' monopoly was the continuation of Jefferson's struggle to create and build that Union.

The military defeat of the Southern slaveocracy, while it opened up the path

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for the growth of capitalist power, at the same time preserved and extended the democratic foundations of America and perpetuated for another two generations the economic basis of small-farmer democracy, through the securing of the West for free labor and the easy access to land won by the people through the Homestead Acts. It is this which gives to the United States in the era of wide open capitalist development its peculiar contradictory character. For while nowhere in the world was the class struggle, in the form of strikes for example, fought more fiercely by both capital and labor, at the same time there did not develop a parallel political consciousness and political organization of labor.

The power of big business grew to an unheard-of degree. At the turn of the century it began to reach out toward the development of an American imperialism. But still the basic content of all democratic political struggles against "Wall Street" —the Greenback movement, the Populist movement, Bryan's Free Silver, the Bull Moose of Theodore Roosevelt, and the New Freedom of Woodrow Wilson—remained the program of small property-owners.

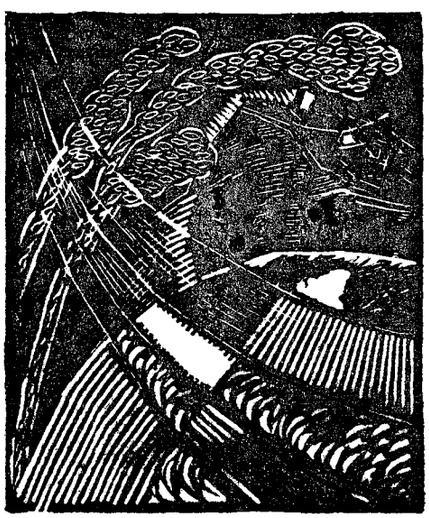
For while the East and the big cities were developing in the typical capitalist manner, the conditions of the West were not too different from those of Jefferson's day; and even in the cities the workers felt, and very often it was true, that their way out was to become property owners themselves—small farmers, small tradesmen, small businessmen. Unlike the situation in most of Europe, the existence of free democratic rights removed the burning incentive for a struggle by the middle classes and workers together against still-existing widespread feudal and semi-feudal conditions for the completion of the democratic revolution—a struggle in which the working class of Europe attained political consciousness of its own position and role in society.

In the last fifty years, during which our society became less fluid with the completion of the settlement of the West and the ending of mass immigration, the heritage of the past has continued to influence the form of our development. It is true that for the past two generations it has become less and less possible for the worker to find economic independence; that the concentration of capital has grown to an unprecedented degree; and that the inexorable development of the capitalist method of production has destroyed the independence even of a large section of the farmers. Nevertheless, the democratic social and political framework in which monopoly capital developed continued to exercise a profound influence upon the ways of thinking of the people, including the working class, and has continued to do so up to the present day. Even the political education through which American labor has gone in the past fifteen years of economic crisis, organization of the basic industries, and struggle against fascism, although it has hastened the development of political consciousness, has created that consciousness in forms peculiar to the American scene.

IT HAS perhaps been the greatest weakness of Marxist thinking in America for the past hundred years that it has neglected until very recently to study these special characteristics of America which, while they do not negate the general laws of social development, cause them to take a form different from anywhere else in the world. The persistent survival of the two-party system, which we have come to recognize as an integral part of American political life, is partially the result of the conception by both capital and labor of the existence of certain basic, common democratic national interests. Even though that system has been utilized at times for the purposes of confusion and oppression, it has justified its existence to the people by serving as a form through which the unification of democratic forces of different groups could be achieved. Only when both parties have been hopelessly bankrupt has a new party been formed, as in 1856—and it has quickly become again in turn a major party in a reconstituted two-party system.

The slogan of "individual initiative" has been used demagogically by reactionary propagandists to counter the demand for security. But it has a democratic, progressive content which arises from American life, and which is being expressed daily in industry and upon the battlefields by American capitalists, workers, and soldiers alike. Only when an abstract general attitude replaces a real understanding of America, can it be dismissed as a demagogic phrase, can its real content be left out of democratic political programs.

The common support by the great majority of all classes in this country of basic democratic principles, together with the material fact of the existence of a large measure of political democracy and the lack of social class-stratification, forms a basis for the unity of the nation against fascist and semi-fascist forces. This can be a political factor of decisive importance in the achievement of a democratic program at home and abroad, the perspective for which was set forth in the accord of Teheran.



Helen West Heller

In fact, the most vicious expressions of the anti-democratic policies which threaten the future of America take the form of an attack upon these long-accepted principles of our national life. They are in particular derived from the South, which is the one part of the country where, except for the brief years of the Reconstruction, a real measure of democracy was never achieved.

Racism, which in America is first of all anti-Negroism, is reinforced by the fascist section of capital and its Bourbon allies and spread into virulent anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, anti-foreignism, and anti-Communism, as a major weapon for the defeat of the people. For the first time since the Civil War, also, serious political attacks are being raised in the press and in Congress against the very concept of democracy—arguments lifted almost bodily from Alexander Hamilton and John Calhoun.

This anti-democratic infection is developing today, of course, primarily under the poisonous influence of Nazi Germany, the focus of world-wide fascism. The destruction of Hitlerite Germany is the first task in stopping the spread of that infection. The fact that our country was able to rally from the unclear national policy and the dark days of division of Munichism to play the tremendous part it has in the great anti-Hitler war of liberation is in large measure due to the democratic content which for 168 years, despite many vicissitudes, has continued to characterize our national existence.

The peculiar circumstances of America in 1776 made it possible for our country to establish the first democratic republic and give leadership to the democratic movement the world over. So now when we have become the most powerful country in the world, with all that that means for good or ill, our unique democratic national inheritance can form the basis of a strengthened national unity which will guarantee that the United States shall play a great progressive part in the winning of peace and prosperity in the years ahead.

Progressives have too much seen in America's unusual development cause for pessimism and fear for the triumph of demagogic reaction. Equipped with a scientific understanding of society and a knowledge and appreciation of the deep currents of American life, we should see rather that America has every possibility of vindicating in the modern world the democratic heritage of 1776 and 1861.

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NEW PATHS FOR PROFESSIONALS

By VIRGINIA SHULL

THE professional and white collar workers—the salaried workers—who make up some twenty million of America's effective manpower, have opened up immense perspectives for themselves and for their contributions toward charting a world situation without precedent. The emergence of the National Wartime Conference of the Professions, the Sciences, the Arts, and the White Collar Fields which has recently completed its second convention in New York (its first was held in May of last year) bears witness to quick and positive response to the great problems raised by the war and the postwar on the part of a major sector of America's "great middle classes." The conference was new in form and radically different from those familiar to most of the participants. And the subjects for consideration were those formerly considered the proper business of other organizations.

For the professionals, in particular, who constitute a large and important section of the twenty million salaried workers, the convention on the over-all problems of the war and peace was a new and significant departure. For many years the professionals have met annually in their own specialist organizations to discuss intra-mural problems. Politics has traditionally been excluded as partisan and alien, and even the problems of other professions have commonly been considered only at their special points of tangence.

The forming of the National Wartime Conference indicates a basic change in the thinking of these groups, and demonstrates that they are interested in having a hand in the shape of the postwar world, that they are discovering effective forms of work, and, most important, their natural allies in that work. It is evidence of real vitality and inventiveness that our highly skilled and trained workers can step so readily into new and untried forms to meet an emergency.

The very structure of the National Wartime Conference was in sharp contrast to the leisurely professional convention with its sessions of technical papers, its displays of books, micro-films, maps, and technical paraphernalia, and its knots of milling bright-faced people exchanging professional and personal notes and gossip. This wartime conference of the same sort of people was sober, preoccupied, and intensely concentrated on the business of the sessions.

Here in a single convention were delegates from sixty-nine of America's major professional associations, representing vast numbers of co-workers in laboratories, universities, workshops, and private offices all over the nation: pediatricians, architects, social workers, doctors, psychologists, dentists, dieticians, librarians, nurses, lawyers, artists, musicians, actors, teachers—representatives from such dominant and established organizations as the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of Medical Social Workers, the American Association of Teachers Colleges, the American Dental Association, the American Medical Association, and the American Library Association and their kindred organizations in other fields. Most significant, however, was the inclusion among the ranks of the nation's most skilled workers of delegates from such organizations as the United Office and Professional Workers of America-CIO, the State, County, and Municipal Workers, the Federal Workers, representing a whole range of skilled and technical workers whose natural relationship to the professions has not been heretofore so widely recognized.

From the beginning this conference recognized new needs, new relationships, new tasks. It was natural enough that the famous astronomer, Dr. Harlow Shapley, should remind his fellow scientists of their social duties for the next five years when the sun "will have radiated only a piffling six hundred thousand billion tons of light." But the other formal addresses to the opening session acknowledged present strategic interconnections of classes and areas of political and social activity. From big business Mr. John F. Fennelly, executive director of the Committee for Economic Development, described the undertakings of that committee toward planning for a postwar world of full employment. From labor Pres. A. F. Whitney of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen reminded the white collar workers of what they owed in standards of living to labor. And an address by Sen. Theodore F. Green of Rhode Island emphasized that whatever projects the delegates might consider would depend on the continuation of a stable and enlightened foreign policy—that is, on the continuation of the foreign policy laid down by Secretary of State Hull and President Roosevelt.

THE heart of the conference lay in the panel sessions, which were divided into sections on planning for full employment, standards of living, international collaboration of the professions in the postwar world, and postwar readjustment and retraining of the professions, each chaired by a nationally recognized expert and liberally furnished with consultants also of national prominence. What went on in these panels told both how far the understanding of the tasks posed by the world crisis for this section of the nation had developed and how much still lay ahead. Here also developed the outlines of the necessary program for achieving the basic desires that originally brought the conferees together.

It was no accident that the panel on the retraining of the professions (chaired by Dr. Eveline M. Burns of the National Planning Association) drew many more delegates than the rest, for it is in this area that the impact of change has already raised acute difficulties for professionals, and promises to raise many more. New architects will be needed for the immense housing projects that will arise immediately at the close of the war. Not nearly enough trained physicists for present needs are available, nor facilities for training new ones, nor teachers to staff the universities. Not enough doctors, not the right kind of training to meet rural medical needs, no proper philosophy behind training to meet such needs. Shortages are worse through discrimination, both in the practice of professions and in training. There are whole areas like the South where present taxes, even if wholly given to education, would not raise standards to those of the rest of the country. Unsolved problems piled up so rapidly in this panel and from so many parts of the crowded room that the monitor's little bell perpetually cut someone off in the middle of an idea, and the conscientious chairman had constantly to apologize.

But the profits of the panel lay not in the specific problems, which the chairman described as a tremendous number of "x's," that the delegates uncovered. It lay rather in the recognition that even the large number of specialized services that have grown up in the various professions to meet the immediate technical needs of the war are haphazard and scattered efforts when it comes to facing even the technical tasks of the postwar, and that major national steps will have to be taken to coordinate such services as are now functioning, and to use the available resources in the nation. Throughout this panel, as through the others, ran the implicit, and often explicit, recognition that large scale planning for the use of America's technical resources was the chief over-riding essential for the realization of a fruitful program. The delegates were discovering the size and shape of their tasks, and they grasped what needed to be done.

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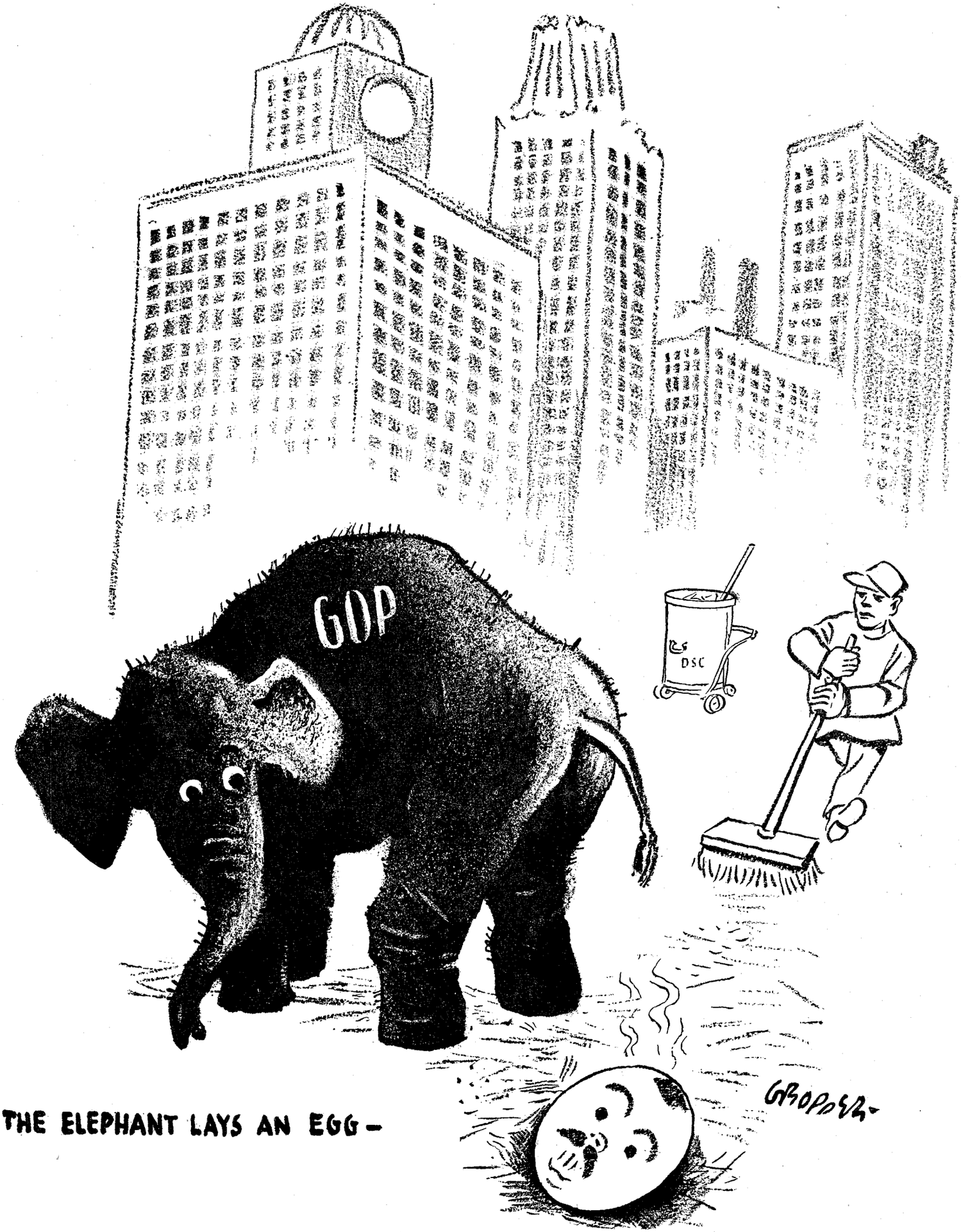

THE ELEPHANT LAYS AN EGG—

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There was no need to convince the conference on the wisdom of postwar international collaboration for the professions and the necessity for effective utilization of their special skills in rehabilitation and reconstruction of the devastated areas. The primary questions in such undertakings were recognized as being how to exchange knowledge and personnel. But again the delegates came to the conclusions that these things would not take place in the old way, and that national provisions would have to be made for such interchange if it were to take place on the scale and in the quality all recognized to be necessary—that something beyond casual private financing was an imperative. They also recognized that any effective international collaboration among the professions would depend on much fuller and more comprehensive working together on the part of the professions at home. One of the primary recommendations from this panel called for the continuation and development of the conference as an instrument toward that end.

THE two panels on full employment and the standards of living charted very important new areas of activity for the conferees. The very fact that a panel on the problems of full employment was conducted bore witness to the new realization on the part of the professions of their integral concern with the basic political and economic problems of the times. It does not matter so much that the panel spent the major part of its time on the definition of "full employment"—whether this meant a million and a half minimum unemployed, whether any "involuntary" unemployment was allowable, whether women would go back into their homes once the war was over (the delegates got a prompt answer on this from the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department, represented among the consultants: three-quarters of them won't), whether one should talk of a "high level of employment" as did Mr Fennelly of the CED, or of unequivocal "full employment" as did Mr. Lewis Merrill of the UOPWA-CIO, and Mr. Robert Lamb of the Steelworkers. What was most important was that the delegates were concerning themselves with such problems, they had a clear picture of their general aim, and they had an understanding that the answers could be found and that they had contributions to make to those answers.

The most pressing of all the problems raised were focused in the standards of living panel. America is accustomed to think of its professional people as comfortably well off. Many of its darling heroes of the screen have been doctors, teachers, reporters, young scientists who live in modest white houses with all the latest kitchen gadgets and struggle more with moral problems than with physical ones. The real picture is unhappily different. The cost of living has risen by twenty-thirty- or as much as fifty percent; but salaries by and large have stood still. And the salaried workers have had to cut dangerously at points vital for their welfare—essential items like medical care, dental care, and further education. White collar workers, moreover, include great numbers not provided for under current social security provisions. Contributions to the panel from many sources served to point up how deeply these factors had already cut into the effective operation of many white collar and professional areas.

Almost more important, it made clear to all participants how identical are the problems of the office workers in the Corn Exchange (where the turnover in personnel as a result of these factors is as high as ninety-five percent in a year) with those of the "professional" group proper. The plight of the teaching profession alone exemplifies the common distress. When forty percent of all teachers get less than $1,200 a year, and 60,000 get less than $600, and half of all teachers less than $1,600, both the teachers and the nation face a real crisis. The situation has cut drastically into the ranks of the most trained and gifted, and all the professions suffer from the results along with other fixed-income groups. The delegates discussed with concern the remedies in price control, the lifting of substandard salary limitations, expansion of social security provisions, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill —measures once considered beyond their scope.

This new willingness to discuss legislative matters indicates a real awakening on the part of representatives from professional bodies. The contribution to that understanding made by the unions in the white collar fields, which have worked at the legislative problems of this group for some time, was a vital one.

ALL in all, though the conference was as a whole a tentative and exploratory one, it has laid the basis for a continuing organization that can serve as an immensely effective medium for solving many of the problems raised at the conference and can speed the full and effective utilization of America's technical skills in the pressing and complex years ahead, if the proposals agreed upon by the delegates are carried out. A permanent National Council organized along the lines of the present conference is projected, which should function as a central body to coordinate the undertakings of the individual cooperating associations. So far its proposed scope is modest, envisaging an annual spring conference on the model of the two preliminary conferences, where delegates from the participating organizations could take up common problems and meet with leading governmental and public figures. It would serve as a nucleus for additional meetings of various sorts as the need arose, would publish proceedings and exchange published matter. The greatest potentialities, however, lie in the proposal that similar conferences be held on a local scale, and the interim committee set up to serve until the reconvention of the conference in October of this year has been delegated, among other things, to get out a handbook on the holding of such local conferences. This is especially necessary since great numbers of the participating organizations are habitually active only for the brief week of their annual convention, and confine their interim life in the main to the maintenance of a small permanent committee and the publication of technical journals. For the most part there are few chapters among the professional organizations that are active locally, and it is difficult to reach the membership of most of the organizations concerned during the year. Local conferences, however, could be called relatively quickly, could initiate various services on a local scale for example. Local conferences could help immensely in such projects as surveys of personnel and laying out programs of community professional needs. And in turn they would deepen and strengthen the work of the National Council by as much as they accomplished locally.

They could become effective spokesmen in behalf of the particular section of national life which they represent. Even if they accomplish no more on a local scale than the present conference they will be serving the democratic function of making known to responsible political bodies the needs and wishes of a section of the people. The conference is presenting its proceedings to the national committees of the Republican and Democratic parties, and proposes to "publish any comment which these bodies may care to make on the issue raised by the conference." The fact that they are reconvening to establish a permanent council immediately before the elections in October serves a similar purpose.

But much of what the conference can ultimately accomplish will depend on how effective the delegates are in spreading the knowledge and understanding they have gained at the present convention among the general membership of their parent organizations. The publication of the proceedings and of the handbook on the running of local conferences will be a vital contribution toward achieving these aims. The problem is also one of time. But if the continuations proceed as surely and as directly as the original Wartime Conference, the professionals and the white collar fields will be well on their way toward a rich and expanding part in winning the war and in the creation of a democratic, progressive, and secure postwar America.

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NM SPOTLIGHT

GOP Roses to Mannerheim

WE WRITE this several days before the Republican convention platform is finally formulated, but in whatever embroidered language it is couched the defense of Hitler's satellite, Finland, by Sen. Arthur Vandenberg and Reps. Clare Luce and Harold Knutson is unimpeachable evidence of the GOP's real intent in world affairs. None of these team mates is of the average run of clubroom twerp. They are leaders of their party, its policy makers, with Vandenberg holding a leading position in party councils. They are ostensibly Americans devoted to destroying Nazi influence in Europe. Yet in the week which the State Department expels the Finnish ambassador, Procope, for activities harmful to the country both Vandenberg and Knutson, following Mrs. Luce's earlier lead, denounce the government for what they call the shabby treatment of Helsinki. So it is shabby to expel the emissary of a Hitler ally, of a country whose bases have been used to bombard American convoys, whose legation in Washington has been a center of espionage and anti-United Nations conspiracies, and whose members have advocated that the United States join Germany against the Soviet Union. All this of course has no meaning to the lords of Republicanism so eager to make of Finland a *cause celebre* in order to subvert the Administration's foreign policy.

Let them send their garlands of roses to Mannerheim and Ryti, to Tanner and Linkomies. The country will now know that this is part and parcel of what the Republicans, if they take over the White House, plan for a Europe in which Hitler's collaborators will continue to reign under the auspices of American bayonets. The trio above represent the more articulate voices of a Republican leadership seeking to intervene on the Continent against the rise of strong, independent democracies. And when Vandenberg burbles that Procope "has never harbored so much as one vagrant thought hostile to the United States" he might just as well add that the thirty seditionists on trial in Washington are innocent of any plotting against the country. The fact is that the Finnish Information Office, responsible to Procope, until recently disseminated propaganda harmful to the grand alliance and reechoed Goebbels' wildest fantasies. Small wonder then that the State Department closed it down. Vandenberg's defense of Finland is a preview of how Republican policy would operate in practice. And it is fair warning to the American voter as to what he would be getting—hatred, resentment and bitterness on a world scale—if he permitted Vandenberg and his friends to run our affairs.

Frame for the Postwar

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT's statement on a postwar security organization is not a plan in any formal sense, but merely a series of proposals designed to rough out in broad strokes the structural principles of the postwar setup. All peace-loving nations are to be members of the international organization, and they are to elect a smaller council to consist of "the four major nations and a suitable number of other nations." There is in addition to be "an international court of justice to deal primarily with justifiable disputes." The new international organization will not be "a superstate with its own police forces and other paraphernalia of coercive power." On the other hand, it will not be an impotent debating society: "We are seeking effective agreement and arrangements through which the nations would maintain, according to their capacities, adequate forces to meet the needs of preventing war and of making impossible deliberate preparation for war, and to have such forces available for joint action when necessary."

The President's proposals are a first step toward implementing those passages in the Moscow and Teheran declarations dealing with the future organization of peace. They represent what the four major powers have thus far agreed upon. They also represent what our own people have agreed upon, for, as the President points out, these proposals are the product of discussion and consultations of a non-partisan character. What is significant about them is that they express *a further extension of the unity of the four-power coalition and of the American people in solving the problems of the peace.*

Those who are preoccupied with foolproof formulas, blueprints and gadgets that will arcweld a perfect peace by the mere pressure of a button miss this significance and hence are dissatisfied with the President's statement. This is a far from perfect world and history unfortunately refuses to follow the pattern of those liberals who, like the editors of the *Nation*, disdain to soil their lily-white hands by even the most transitory contact with a Badoglio, or announce that unless there is an international police force, "we shall have lost the peace." Nor is it possible to adjourn everything in order to insist with Dorothy Thompson that come hell or high water, European federation must be the precondition to all planning for peace. Miss Thompson's claim to oracular wisdom in such matters is seriously brought into question, to say the least, by her habit of changing her mind between columns and by her frequent inability to distinguish friends from enemies: in the column in which she clamors for European federation she summons to her support none other than Sen. Burton K. Wheeler, whose opinions are more honored in Berlin than in this country.

It is a mistake to think that the problem of creating a durable peace is primarily one of engineering, of building machinery that will avoid the defects of the League of Nations machinery. It is primarily a problem of consolidating and extending the relationships, national and international, that have already been forged in a war *fundamentally different from* World War I.

Mr. Wallace's Mission

THE Vice President's trip to China coincided with one of the gravest crises that nation has ever confronted. The ravages of seven years of uninterrupted war have left their tragic mark upon all phases of Chinese life and upon all Chinese. The economy of Free China has undergone an alarming degree of deterioration. Famines, caused in considerable part by misrule, have decimated entire populations. The armies under the leadership of the Central Government have not the stamina nor the materiel for assuming the offensive, nor do they seem able to stem a determined Japanese drive. And permeating the whole structure of the country is the poisonous influence of the reactionary, defeatist, and fascist-minded politicians who play so large a role in Chungking.

The key city of Changsha fell to the enemy about the day Mr. Wallace flew in from the Soviet Union. Ironically enough he was feted, shortly after his arrival, by Ho Ying-chin, the Minister of War and Chief of Staff who is widely believed to be more interested in warring against the Chinese Communists than against the Japanese fascists. An important part of the Vice President's mission was to encourage the emergence of a new and vigorous leadership in China politically equipped to carry forward the war against Japan jointly with the other members of the United Nations.

Mr. Wallace has unquestionably strengthened the position of those Chinese patriots who know that the opening of the second front in Europe brings inevitably closer the day of liberation for China. He

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has undoubtedly conveyed our government's conviction that without the achievement of national unity within China all the lend-lease in the world is not going to make China a free nation. The war has opened to China the perspective of freedom and leadership but the opportunity is being lost by the continuation of the suicidal disunity provoked by the reactionaries. It is to be hoped in the interests both of China and the United Nations that Mr. Wallace's visit has helped set in motion the forces of unity so desperately needed now.

Tragic Faux Pas

IF BECAUSE of his colossal blunder Capt. Oliver Lyttleton should lose his post in the British cabinet, it is almost a certainty that he can become the London correspondent for the other captain—Joseph Patterson who operates the New York *Daily News*. That paper has been delighted, simply overjoyed that Lyttleton's tongue slipped when he said that the United States had provoked Japan into making war against us. Captain Lyttleton practically retched with apologies before Parliament in explaining himself, but Captain Patterson's editorial writer sees no reason for this abject wriggling to restore allied harmony. It's the truth, ain't it, says the *News*, so why crawl on your belly, Captain Lyttleton? And this is where the tragic features of Lyttleton's *faux pas* come in. It helped kindle the hot anti-Roosevelt flames of the Patterson-McCormick newspaper fraternity. Now it has "proof" that the President did start the war against Tokyo, that our side committed the crime of Pearl Harbor. If ever our boys in the Pacific should be unfortunate enough to read this Patterson diatribe we hope that their protest will ring clear across the Pacific and over the continent to the *Daily News* Building in New York. After all Captain Patterson tells them that they are wasting their lives in a battle which their government started in the first place, that they are killing the gentle, well-mannered Japanese fascists for no reason whatever. In fact, according to the *News*, there is no moral basis for the struggle except Mr. Roosevelt's private love for blood and thunder. This is news treatment which plays directly into Hitler's hands. It is bad enough when these same claims seep into the country from Tokyo via short wave; it is intolerable when a newspaper published within our own borders repeats them without the flicker of an eyelash.

Italian Labor United

ONE news item of supreme importance that has gone practically unnoticed in the American press is the amalgamation of the Catholic, Socialist, and Communist trade unions of Italy into a single confederation. Not only does this development represent an end to the ancient dissension between the minority Catholic labor groups and the larger unions led by the Socialists and Communists but it is symptomatic of the spirit of unity that pervades the peninsula. Now the democratic Bonomi government, recognized by the Allied Control Commission after many anxious moments, has the support of a thriving labor movement without which the tasks of economic reconstruction and war mobilization would have been immeasurably more difficult. The grand labor alliance will function by establishing a single federation for each industry, one council for each province, and single provincial unions for each industrial group. The agreement among the three partners assures the broadest democracy, with all positions of leadership subject to decision by ballot, with all members free to express their opinions. No union is to be affiliated to any political party. In addition to the fact that all unions in liberated territory have agreed to merge with the confederation, new unions which may come up in the future will be given representation on the executive committee.

This major turn of labor affairs in Italy is bound to reverberate throughout the world. And what is especially impressive is that it took place in a country severely depressed economically and moving forward from the pall of fascist deterioration. Naturally, the labor camp led by Luigi Antonini in this country will hardly find such progress pleasing. After all Antonini, the great instructor in trade union democracy by use of autocratic measures, was about to embark for Rome to teach Italy's workers how he conducts business in his own machine-ridden local. Now Antonini will find that there is no need for his unwelcome assistance and that if it were possible he could learn a thing or two from Italy's organized labor.

Photo by PM.

Neil Adrian David is the son of a hero. With his father's commanding officer, Lieut. R. W. Anderson, he holds the medal awarded recently to Charles W. David, who rescued ninety-two men when a transport was torpedoed last year. "There is nothing more to be added except this—Charles W. David was a Negro." See the editorial "Shadow of a Swastika," on the opposite page.

Sitting on Reconversion

LAST week, a few days before it adjourned, Congress finally got around to doing something about ending the purely paper existence of the recommendations in the Baruch-Hancock report on postwar adjustment. Congress passed a bill setting up machinery for terminating billions of dollars in war contracts and assuring speedy payment to contractors. This is important, but it covers only a small part of the reconversion problem. Despite the recent

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Brewster episode and despite the mass of testimony before the Murray subcommittee on its need, Congress has still failed to act on legislation that would plan the shift from wartime to peacetime production and provide for the millions of workers who will be affected by this shift.

R. J. Thomas, president of the United Automobile Workers-CIO, the other day focused attention on the crucial nature of the problem in a statement in which he pointed out that 800,000 workers have already lost their jobs as a result of cutbacks and 1,000,000 more are to be dropped by the end of the year. Thomas presented a series of proposals that reflect the constructive approach of labor, particularly the CIO, to the problems of reconversion. His proposals, which call for labor - management - government cooperation, include centralized planning by a single government agency, a ninety-day notice on cutbacks to labor and management, initial steps to schedule the resumption of non-military production so that actual production can start in January 1945, labor representation in the planning of cutbacks, dismissal wages for the reconversion period, special emphasis on the development of foreign trade, a program of public works and housing to supplement, if necessary, private employment.

The best reconversion measure before Congress is the bill sponsored by Sen. Harley Kilgore of West Virginia. There is danger, however, that rivalry between this bill and that sponsored by Sens. James E. Murray and Walter F. George will produce a deadlock and give Congress an excuse for doing nothing. While the Murray-George bill is less adequate, there are many points of substantial agreement between it and the Kilgore bill. It should be possible for the supporters of both to get together on a single measure and fight to have it passed. For, as Mr. Thomas rightly points out, "uncertainties about the future are hindering war production" and a reconversion program is "a war necessity."

The People to the Rescue

THE gutter level which was reached in the Senate debate over the appropriation for the Fair Employment Practice Committee and the several amendments which were passed to appease the southerners, cannot hide the fact that the southern poll taxers mustered every bit of strength possible and failed to kill FEPC. They

Shadow of the Swastika

A YOUNG mother stood proudly as high naval officers in New York last week gave her the posthumous medal honoring her husband, a member of the Coast Guard, who had died after rescuing a hundred men from the icy waters of the Atlantic last winter. He had dived scores of times into the wintry seas and had contracted pneumonia from exposure. The young mother, her three-year-old son in her arms, heard the naval officer say of her husband: "His great courage and unselfish perseverance contributed to the saving of many lives and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service." An instance of typical American heroism in this war. There is nothing more to be added except this: the hero was Charles W. David, Jr., a Negro.

Pick up the story from here: almost the very hour that was happening in one part of New York, a band of hoodlums, joined by police, broke into a meeting of Negroes and whites in the Ft. Greene inter-racial project in Brooklyn, flailed away with baseball bats and knives, and seriously wounded several of the colored youth present. The hoodlums resented the friendly relations between the families in the project, and they staged a miniature Detroit. This disgraceful episode happened while America was hearing news that Negro troops in France were mopping up the enemy in the invasion area; that Negro aviators under the leadership of Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis had shot down five Nazi planes, losing only one themselves; that in Chester, Pa., the union in the Sun Shipbuilding Company employing 34,000 workers, had elected a Negro-white slate to office; that the Negro Freedom Rally sponsors had honored Aurelia Carter, of New York, champion arc welder, naming her Miss Negro Victory Worker for '44. Miss Carter had said, in an interview, that she became the champion welder because our boys needed the best. "Black boy or white boy, it doesn't make any difference in my own thoughts," she said.

UNFORTUNATELY, there were too many in America who had different thoughts. Evil men were out to destroy the meaning of Sailor David's heroic sacrifices; to subvert what he had died for; to negate Lieutenant Colonel Davis's brave fliers. These dangerous men were impelled by this fear: the war against fascism was drawing black and white together. Desperate measures were necessary to cripple democracy.

Black and white realized the peril: this was manifested at the great demonstration at Madison Square Garden last Monday where many thousands of men and women of both races gathered at the Negro Freedom Rally. They bespoke the dominant trend in America; the Ft. Greene episode is manifestation of a recessive trend, but one sufficiently strong to pose immediate perils to our nation and our war effort. Information is at hand that similar episodes hang over the heads of other large urban communities where there are many Negroes—Detroit, for instance. The men who did Hitler's work last summer are preparing their offensive: relations between white and Negro are improving, and that is bad for Hitler and for those who reflect his thinking here at home.

We believe this threat imperils the nation as a whole. It is not solely a Negro issue. We believe, too, that the six-point yardstick issued by twenty-five leading Negro organizations for selecting a presidential candidate, highlights the problem. Point Number One in the yardstick poses the question of the candidate's adequacy as a war leader; this is followed by questioning the would-be President's stand on such issues as the poll tax, anti-lynch legislation, permanent FEPC, the segregation of Negroes in the armed forces: issues that deal with democracy and concern every American.

We know one candidate who falls short. He lives in the governor's mansion at Albany and is currently engaged in watching the developments in Chicago. Perhaps, for that reason, he is too busy to countermand the efforts of his associates in Albany to whitewash the bestiality of those state policemen who had tortured a Negro named John H. Jones, last February. Mr. Jones, after suffering a severe beating, was hung from the twelfth floor window of the State Office Building. He had allegedly campaigned against the Republicans. Such tactics do not seem to horrify this presidential candidate who distinguished himself by robbing our white and Negro soldiers of their right to vote; who shelved the recommendations of his own committee on discrimination, and who talked double-talk when queried on the poll tax. His qualifications can best be measured by the tenets which appeared in a well known book published some years ago, the author of which is subjected to considerable attention from men of various races battling today in the fields of Normandy and on the plains of the Ukraine.

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wind up with having the agency buttressed by law for the duration, instead of executive order only. Their utter failure to score is completely due to action by the people. "It's purely a pressure vote," some of the southerners were hollering around Washington. They were correct. The Republicans didn't want to support FEPC. They intended to knife it quietly, but not for the record. Republican Senate Whip Kenneth Wherry (Neb.) and the unspeakable Chapman Revercomb of West Virginia on the first day the FEPC appropriation was before the Senate were most active as stooges for the southern Democrats. They turned turtle; there was too much heat from home.

The fascist Negro-baiting Senators Bilbo and Eastland of Mississippi, Overton of Louisiana, and McClellan of Arkansas, were aided by Senators Connally, Hill, and George, who pride themselves on being gentlemen. The poll taxers turned on their biggest guns. Yet they lost even in their own party: more voted against than with them. It should help weaken their position at the forthcoming Democratic convention. Incidentally, Senator Pepper of Florida should be commended for speaking up in favor of FEPC.

As to the amendments, the worst, sponsored by Russell of Georgia, was defeated in the Senate: that no money should be used to initiate proceedings which might abrogate or nullify existing contracts. Senators Chavez and Murdock nailed this one. Of the amendments which passed, one gives the same right of appeal to the President to anyone found guilty of discriminatory practices, as the agency has. Another says no funds shall be used to investigate a complaint which has as its object seizure of a plant by the government. No plant has been seized to date for discriminatory practices, and it is assumed that the President's sole right to say what plant shall be seized is not affected. A third disallows any regulation or procedure which modifies existing law. Conceivably this could be used by some tricky adversaries to go into court and delay compliance. But if the same Negro organizations which submerged differences and united behind FEPC, plus the CIO, which did a splendid job in backing it, continue their ardent support, it is in a stronger position than ever. Incidentally Catholic groups, YW and YMCAs, civic organizations and others did valuable work in defending the agency. And Senator Mead, floor leader for the FEPC fight, produced a statement by AFL President William Green which was effective.

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

CHERBOURG, VITEBSK, SAIPAN

Cherbourg is ours. It is clear that we could not assemble and deploy a really large striking force—large enough for the forthcoming campaign in France—without having a large port. We need at least one large port and a *place d'armes* of some 2,000 square miles to accumulate the necessary forces and deploy them for a march on Paris. Thus far, that is from June 6 until now, our fighting in Normandy has been primarily aimed at acquiring a suitable *place d'armes*, which in this case is the triangular peninsula with its tip at Cap de la Hague (northwest of Cherbourg) and its base on the Caen-Avranches line. When we have secured this line we will be able to deploy between fifteen and twenty divisions on a front facing the interior of France. This is when the Big Show in the West will start.

There appears to have been some hitch in our schedule, however. Information of an obscure character has seeped into the press and into the air-waves to the effect that we had been expected to capture Cherbourg somewhat earlier, in fact during the very first days of the invasion, and that a landing at Barfleur had been attempted to this effect, but we had been repulsed. We mention this only because some commentators let the cat out of the bag, with the obvious consent of the censors. Unfortunately some people, inclined to criticism, have seized upon this rumor in order to start panning our leadership. This in our opinion is entirely uncalled for. An operation of such scope and complexity as our landing in France is always bound to develop a hitch somewhere. This is to be expected. In fact it would seem that we are not much behind schedule, judging by the fact that our capture of Cherbourg comes only two or three days after the start of the big Soviet offensive. It should not take us much more than ten days or two weeks to complete our "prelims" on the Cotentin Peninsula, form a front from Caen to Avranches and get poised for the big jump deeper into France.

Meanwhile the Red Army on the Karelian Isthmus cracked the Mannerheim Line in a matter of ten days and captured the key to southern Finland—Viborg. Should it succeed in pushing a few miles northward to the junction of Lapeenranta, the Finnish armies in Southern Finland—in the Kotka-Helsinki-Hango area—would be almost completely cut off from the eastern group stuck in the 200-mile deep salient between Lakes Ladoga and Onega (the cities of Petrozavodsk and Povenetz, for instance, are 200 miles to the east of Viborg). At this writing the Finns are pretty well split, with the great water system of Saima, a labyrinth of lakes, rivers, and marshes, wedged in between their western and eastern groups of armies. The Murmansk railroad and the Stalin Canal, connecting the far North with Leningrad, will be free in a matter of days. The eastern part of the Gulf of Finland has been cleared of the enemy and the Soviet Baltic Fleet has more elbow-room. With the offensive-defensive zone of the Mannerheim Line in Soviet hands, the Finnish Army has been pushed off the strategical chess-board and from now on can have a nuisance value only.

While it is hard to tell what the Soviet High Command will do in the immediate future about the Finnish western group—in the direction of Helsinki—the eastern Finnish group is under severe attack by General Meretskov's army group between Lakes Ladoga and Onega and along the latter. Here the Finnish army group has lost its defense positions along the Svir River and will be inexorably pushed into the lake wilderness north and northwest of Ladoga. Eventually the seven German divisions in northern Finland will either have to come south and fight their way through to Germany by way of the western or southern ports of Finland, or will have to retreat into Norway. Thus the Karelian campaign (June 10-20) has practically eliminated the 800-mile northern front as a prime strategic factor, even if the fascist government in Helsinki does not throw up the sponge at once.

In Italy the preliminaries continue to develop with marked success for our arms. We call this campaign preliminary because it is intended to permit us to reach the real ramparts of Fortress Europe along the horseshoe of the Alps, from Ventimiglia on the Riviera to the Brenner and to Trieste. At Ventimiglia we can join hands with the French Maquis and in Trieste—with Marshal Tito.

It must be admitted that General Alexander's original plan, which was to destroy the German armies in Italy, has not been fulfilled. The Nazi rats are escaping up the "sewer," offering only sporadic resistance. Alexander tried hard to push his left flank forward, holding back his right in the hope

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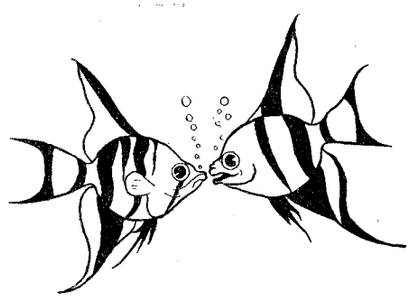
of cutting across Italy from the left to the right so as to trap the German eastern army. But the scheme did not work and now our front runs approximately straight across Italy. We are roughly forty miles from the Leghorn-Florence-Rimini line where the Germans are expected to make a delaying stand. So much for the "preliminaries."

THE eastern "act" of the Big Show started on June 23 when the armies of General Bagramian launched a powerful pincers attack on the great German-held fortress of Vitebsk. A day later the armies of General Chernyakhovski launched an attack on Orsha and Moghilev and now General Rokossovski has captured Zhlobin in the direction of Bobruisk and Minsk—he had a large bridgehead across the Dnieper north of Zhlobin, at Rogachev, which he took four months ago, in late February.

In order to understand what is going on, it is necessary to visualize the conformation of the Eastern Front as of the day of the beginning of the second Soviet summer offensive, i.e., on June 23, 1944. The Germans still have a huge salient on the northern half of their main front in the Soviet Union. The base of this salient is the line running 300 miles from Koenigsberg in East Prussia to the southwestern fringe of the Pripet Marshes, north of Kovel. This great salient reaches almost 500 miles to Narva, 400 miles to Pskov, 350 miles to Vitebsk and 250 miles to Zhlobin (all distance measured along perpendiculars to the Koenigsberg-Kovel base line). The area of this salient is approximately 150,000 square miles and thus represents three-quarters of the 200,000 square miles of Soviet territory still in German hands. The salient reaches to within eighty miles of Leningrad and to 375 miles of Moscow. Its central bulge still cuts the trunk Leningrad-Odessa railroad line between Vitebsk and Zhlobin—a distance of 175 miles.

The main strategic axis of the Eastern Front, i.e., the Moscow-Belostok-Warsaw line, runs almost through the middle of the salient. This line is the historic avenue of invasion and counter-invasion between Russia and Germany. The Germans have erected a mighty "shield" athwart this line and have riveted this shield of permanent and powerful fortifications on the fortresses of Vitebsk, Orsha, Moghilev, and Zhlobin. The Western Dvina, flowing from Vitebsk to Polotsk, Dvinsk, and Riga covers the left flank of the German shield. The Pripet Marshes guard the right flank of the shield. Minsk is the key-base supplying this shield. Borisov Lepel and Bobruisk are its forward bases.

With this mighty shield cracked or unhinged—the hinges are Vitebsk and Zhlobin—the Red Army can strike straight through the Smolensk Gate, between Vitebsk and Orsha, and do either one of three



things or any two, or all three: it can strike at Vilno and Kovno so as to cut off General Lindemann's armies of the Baltic, it can split the German northern half of the front by striking straight at Minsk, Belostok, and Warsaw, or it can wheel southward from Minsk and encircle the German armies holding the "shield" and press them into the Pripet Marshes. As this operation develops Marshal Zhukov may strike northwestward from the region of Kovel and march athwart the main German communication lines running northeast to southwest through Brest-Litovsk and Belostok.

At present the Red Army has cracked the German front at Vitebsk, at Orsha, at Moghilev and at Zhlobin. The mighty "shield" is beginning to crumble. The attack is being conducted according to the typical Red Army operational pattern of heavy blows raining on different sectors in quick succession: June 23, northwest and southeast of Vitebsk; June 24, at Orsha and at Moghilev; June 25, at Zhlobin. The fires of the great attack have spread to a front of 200 miles in three days, with another 200 miles of front aflame in Karelia.

LAST week's air-sea battle between the Philippines and the Marianas was an important victory for us. If the battle of Midway two years ago was our Pacific "Stalingrad," the battle of the Philippines is our Pacific "Kursk." At Midway we repelled the Japanese who were on the offensive. Last week we beat back their counteroffensive. The latter battle took place more than 2,500 miles *west* of the place where the battle of Midway was fought. This is a tell-tale shift. Then the *Japanese* were coming, now *we* are coming.

There are two Japanese defense positions covering the east coast of China against us. One stretches from Tokio almost due south and consists of a chain of islands, among which the Bonins, Volcanos, Marianas, and western Carolines are the most prominent. The chain reaches to the eastern part of the East-Indies and is some 3,000 miles long. The other (inner Pacific) position stretches from the southernmost Japanese island (Kyushu) and consists of the chain of Ryukyu Islands, Formosa, the group of the Batan Islands—which have nothing to do with the famous Bataan Peninsula on Luzon—the Philippines, and reaches to Borneo. This position is some 2,000 miles long. Between these two defense lines there is a pear-shaped open expanse of sea with a maximum width of 1,500 miles between the Marianas and Luzon.

About two weeks ago Admiral Nimitz invaded the Marianas and landed troops on Saipan. Thus we have cracked the outer Japanese defense line, our Navy is free to move in the open between the two lines and soon our carrier-based planes will be able to raid the Japanese "esophagus" which runs between the second line of islands and the China coast. We are actually on Japan's doorstep. From the newly built airfield on Saipan (Marianas) our "B-29's" will soon be able to raid Japan, Formosa and the Philippines.

And so June 18, the Japanese Fleet came out of its hiding and steamed toward the Marianas with intent to kill. It launched its carrier planes at our great task-fleet cruising west of Saipan and covering our landings there. In this attack the Japanese lost most of their planes—more than 400 of them. Then our task-fleet moved west with intent to destroy the Japanese Fleet. But our attack by carrier planes started late in the day. We sank five enemy warships and damaged another ten, but the bulk of the enemy squadron escaped to the west and slunk into the passage between Formosa and Luzon.

In China the Japanese are storming Henyang, feverishly trying to push a direct rail line between Hankow and Canton. Things are, therefore, not going well in China. A good deal of the blame undoubtedly falls on Chungking, which continues to oppose political unity in China and is holding back some of its best troops instead of sending them against the Japanese. After all, the Japanese are waging their campaign south of the Yangtze with only twelve-odd divisions.

Allied troops in Burma entered Mogaung and the business of pushing the Ledo Road to a junction with the Burma Road is proceeding apace, despite monsoons.

Beg Your Pardon

IN OUR June 27 issue in an editorial, "For Common Justice," NM misquoted a letter to the President from Rep. Vito Marcantonio and Dean William H. Hastie, counsel to the two Negro soldiers whose life imprisonment sentences on a trumped-up rape charge have been reduced. The International Labor Defense is asking that the Negro soldiers be granted unconditional pardon and allowed to return to the fighting front. By mistake a sentence pointing out that the "woman of loose morals" whom they were convicted of having "raped" had "never initiated a complaint against them" appeared with the word "never" omitted.

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PAC: CAMPAIGN VANGUARD

By DAVID KEMPER

Washington.

IT IS an old basic truth that the hit dog yelps. So from the falsetto cries coming from some tory congressmen it would be fair to judge that they are hurt. It is such anguish that produced the Butler resolution in the Senate for a sweeping investigation of the CIO Political Action Committee. But the enemies of the PAC did not win a clear victory even on the Senate resolution to investigate. Some thirty-seven amendments have been added in committee to Butler's resolution, pointing the finger of senatorial investigation also at an assorted half-dozen of publisher Frank Gannett's "fronts," Elizabeth Dilling's Patriotic Research Bureau, the American National Democratic Committee, the National Industrial Council of the National Association of Manufacturers, Gerald L. K. Smith's America First Party, the National Blue Star Mothers of America and many other worthy candidates for the light of public exposure.

Why are the tories so fearful of the PAC? Simply because they are aware that here is a growing movement that carries a punch in both hands, a great people's crusade about to swing into action. It is a committee that is unafraid and has volunteered in the person of its chairman, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, to answer questions in open hearings. It is not only unafraid, but it is going ahead with plans to open a still wider crusade beyond its own ranks among those who share its political aims.

At a national conference of the PAC in Washington June 19 and 20 came a call for a national crusade to seek $3,000,000 from America's rank and file to insure the drafting and the reelection of President Roosevelt. It is to be guided by an as yet unnamed committee and backed by farmers, housewives, workers, and businessmen. Behind this committee will be the full strength of the people, those who want jobs after the war, not breadlines, who don't propose to be neutral about the peace, and who definitely do not want another war.

In order that all the work of the new committee will be thoroughly legal, it was especially designed to conform with the provisions of the federal statutes and particularly the Smith-Connally act. Donations from union treasuries are forbidden by law this year, and the Hatch act limits all gifts to $5,000 per donor. So it is up to the people, this time, to see to it that there is enough money to carry on a real campaign for the Roosevelt ticket. The President, overworking with the problems of the fast-moving war in Europe and the quickening of action in the far-flung Pacific front, won't have time to do much campaigning himself. This is the role the new committee is to take on.

Some of the leaders in the top council of the new committee will be from the CIO, but there will also be many outstanding Americans outside labor's ranks. It invites and expects the broadest support from all citizens, regardless of affiliation or economic status. In its own language it will "mobilize the electorate for full and enlightened participation in the 1944 elections, national, state, and local." It will seek "to unite workers, farmers, and all progressives . . . to assure the renomination and election of Franklin D. Roosevelt," and "to elect a Congress committed to full support of President Roosevelt and the program and policies which he espouses." The preamble to the PAC platform for 1944 contained warnings that it was a "dangerous delusion" to believe that the military victory yet to be won would be easy, and that the menace from the forces working for a negotiated peace would have to be fought "with the same unified determination that we must show the foe outside our borders."

THE platform marked the November election campaigns as the point of crucial decision where it will be determined whether "we can move forward with confidence to peace, freedom and security" or "be thrown back into insecurity and want, imperialist conflict, fascism, and inevitably into a third World War," and affirmed that common action "in every walk of life, regardless of formal party affiliation" could avert the catastrophe. They propose to measure each candidate by his past record of performance and by his stand on vital issues. They advocated close cooperation with Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China and the people of the occupied lands, the "complete extermination of Nazism, fascism, and Japanese imperialism and all their evils." They called for ensuring the "rights and freedoms we fight to preserve and increase," supporting the Atlantic Charter, the Good Neighbor Policy. They called for deepening the friendship and cooperation between nations to carry out the Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran agreements, and in endorsing the President's foreign policy called for full labor participation on all planning and administrative bodies charged with carrying out the broad program of the peace.

For the home front the PAC program adopted the President's Bill of Economic Rights and urged planning of the national economy to achieve them; at the same time it rejected as false the contention that "there is a conflict between the planned utilization of our national resources and genuine free enterprise." As measures to meet the goals of the new Bill of Rights, they called for full employment for men and women alike in the postwar period. They went on record for a federal endorsement of the annual wage principle and the encouragement of its incorporation in collective bargaining agreements. Full employment, they state, is primarily the task of private industry, and can be achieved with adequate planning and the participation and assistance of government. But the government, they also state, must guarantee full employment with a prepared program of useful work to whatever extent private industry falls short of the goal.

A MAJOR section of the platform was devoted to the war economy and reconversion. It called for a fair and non-discriminatory balance between wages, prices and profits, for effective price and rent control, rationing and heavier progressive taxes on high personal incomes and corporate profits. It asked an increase in exemptions and credits for dependents, opposed the sales tax and supported the Kilgore bill for centralized planning of reconversion with labor participation.

There was a farm and housing program, a call for a comprehensive public works program—federal, state and local—for soil conservation, rural electrification, a farm tenant purchase program. Small business was not ignored. They urged adequate credits to small business to finance the purchase of surplus government property and to facilitate reconversion and favored federal assistance in giving small business access to expert research, engineering and marketing services. International cartels and monopolies which restrict production and stifle fair competition were condemned as hampering full development of domestic and foreign trade and endangering world peace.

Full support was given service men and women, asking generous provision for their special problems and demobilization. Finally there was another call for full political democracy and the abolition of the poll tax.

This is an effective program to scotch the enemies of the people and one that should grow until they are engulfed by the overwhelming will of democratic Americans for a better place to work and enjoy life.

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Germany: Last Stage

(*Continued from page 4*)

corners selling familiar papers like the *Vossische Zeitung*, the *Frankfurter General Anzeiger*, and the *Magdeburgische Zeitung*. In other cases, such papers were showered on streets from rooftops. The police at first did not realize what was happening. By the time the Gestapo became alarmed a large number of papers had already been distributed. Under the old newspaper titles there was a new content: appeals not to believe Nazi propaganda, reports on German reverses, predictions of terrible invasion blows, warnings that Germany has lost the war and that only by the abolition of the Hitler regime could the German people help themslves. The Gestapo believed that the papers were printed in England and dropped from planes. The sentences for picking up leaflets dropped by the Allies and not turning them in immediately to the authorities have been greatly increased. German radio stations and newspapers are constantly reporting trials of people who violated the law forbidding the reading of foreign leaflets.

The German underground movement has also found an active center of support in the National Committee of "Free Germany" in Moscow, with which it remains in closest touch by means of radio, handbills, etc.

At this time it is impossible to predict what part the German underground will play in impending developments, but the existence of a German underground cannot be contested. Every assistance must be given to it because the stronger it grows, the lighter will be the casualties sustained by the Allied armies in the final phase of struggle for the destruction of the Hitler dictatorship.

Gerry Obliges the GOP

(*Continued from page 8*)

sible officials aware of the effect such a rule would have on production. And he pointed out that some of the gentlemen in Congress who long have been trying to weaken the Wagner Act will not return next year.

Reilly will not admit that it was only on the insistence of Chairman Harry Millis of the NLRB that the WLB was called in on the proposed regulation, or that the intention originally was to adopt it without consulting labor or industry. He did say that there was a lapse of about two days between a meeting with the WLB people and the issuance of a notice of the hearing to labor and industry. It is known that during those two days labor burned up the telephone wires bombarding the Board with demands for a public hearing.

READERS' FORUM

Morris Schappes

TO NEW MASSES: It looks to me as if the Four Freedoms, Casa Blanca, Cairo, and the Atlantic Charter—all just happened to divert attention from his case. If Morris Schappes is in jail, no one in his right mind with any degree of sensibility for the finer, democratic way of life can be very happy outside.

The Governor states that the reason he cannot pardon Schappes or commute his sentence is because his "public conscience" will not permit. I seem to recall when the Governor embarked upon the private practice of the law for a brief spell before taking up residence at the Executive Mansion—that he *was* interested to the point of cleaning up what he termed "that mess at City College." It was only when the reactionary press began to jump down his throat (and out of the corner of his eye he saw Pennsylvania Avenue fading out) that he did an about-face and dropped the "case" as if it were a hot potato. Can the Governor explain the difference between his "private conscience" if the hounds had not bayed so loud—and, let's say, his present "public conscience?"

IT DOES not seem so long ago—that is, measured in terms of history. I remember walking up the Grand Concourse. I was on my way to a well known social-political clubhouse. When I arrived the place was crowded, especially the bar. I'm not a drinking man. After three or four beers (it has to be pretty hot and they must have something to eat around) I'm through. Well—you know that spirit of camaraderie that makes for good bar fellows. There was a chap there, leaning against the bar, slightly tipsy. I never saw him before, but it'll be a long time before I forget him.

"C'mon fellers," he bellowed, "have a drink on me—in five minutes they'll blast those lousy wop bastards' souls to hell!"

Factually—he was partly right. At precisely eleven that night, Sacco and Vanzetti were due to go to the chair. That's why I had been out walking around. That's how I came to be at the club. I couldn't sleep. Oh, well—it's no use going over that again. . . . I refused to drink with him. He became abusive. I told him off—and plenty. Everybody was in on it. I sobered that bar fly up that night. I guess I was pretty well labelled—socially and politically thereafter.

Mio: I hadn't thought to choose—this—
this ground; but it will do. . . .

No one offered me a drink this time. Schappes just had a bit of a quiver in his voice when he suggested, "If I'm in jail, what will you people be doing out?" Everyone looked a bit teary. Max Yergan spoke as if his heart would break. Even Bella Dodd, Morris' Bella mia, tough little dame that she is, was just about ready to find a convenient shoulder.

The funny part of all of this is that Morris is much braver and more resourceful than his friends.

All of us have missed the boat. We let them take Schappes for a ride. It's true that we all went down to wave goodby, but how much did we do to stop them casting off the rope? I know that, if they keep Schappes in jail, he'll make better men out of everyone he comes in contact with—including the guards. Yet, that's too big a price for any man to pay.

Thayer never had a peaceful hour. Fuller paid his share. Most of us wouldn't vote for Dewey even if he had commuted Schappes' sentence. It would have been rank hypocrisy to have intimated otherwise. I think that all we so-called liberals have pleaded and cajoled too long. We should start demanding. While it was still a remote possibility that the "powers that be" might have been swayed—we hesitated to anger the "gods." They have turned the key on Schappes. It is high time to storm the citadel with protest.

Essandra: Mio, my son, know this where you
lie, this is the glory of earth-born men and
women, not to cringe, never to yield, but
standing, take defeat implacable and de-
fiant, die unsubmitting—

If all of us do not do our damndest—twenty-four hours a day—to bring him back, there won't be much freedom just walking around outside.

MARTIN JANNET.

[A rally to petition Governor Dewey for the release of Morris U. Schappes will be held at the Paramount Mansions, 183rd St. and St. Nicholas Ave. at 8 P.M. June 29. Rev. Clayton Powell, Eugene P. Connally, and Rabbi Hyman Rabinowitz will speak. Entertainment by Josh White and others.]

From Milwaukee

TO NEW MASSES: I want to congratulate you on the Wisconsin article. Besides being extremely interestingly presented, it presents the whole situation quite accurately.

When I was in New York recently, I found among people not directly connected with national political work considerable misunderstanding over the Wisconsin situation—the same sensationalized impression of the Willkie defeat created by the metropolitan star reporters who accompanied him and a similar sensationalized impression of La Follette's recent break with Roosevelt. I was glad to be able to tell them to read your article in the NEW MASSES with full confidence that they would get a correct picture of the situation.

N. SPARKS.

Milwaukee, Wis.

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THE CHALLENGE MET

By WILLIAM ROSE BENET, EDWIN SEAVER, and SAMUEL PUTNAM

The following comments on Samuel Sillen's article "The Challenge of Change" (NM, May 16) are chosen from a number we have received. Mr. Sillen's article dealt with the problems raised in Bernard De Voto's recent volume "The Literary Fallacy," an attack on American writers of the 1920's and 1930's. The article analyzed the major literary currents of these two decades against the social background of American life. It concluded by broaching the problem of writers in the present war and postwar period, stressing that the case for a more boldly affirmative literature is based on the ascendancy of the democratic forces in America and the world. This will be amplified in another article by Mr. Sillen to appear shortly.

MR. SAMUEL SILLEN's article commenting upon the De Voto-Sinclair Lewis controversy and Mr. De Voto's *The Literary Fallacy* is interesting. It is written from the Marxist or Marxian point of view, to which I am no thorough subscriber, being wedded to no particular political or social theory—distrusting theory in general—but liking to fight for specific political, economic, and social objectives as they come up. To my mind no set of concepts is the answer to everything, nor is it proof against the perversity in man and his desire to be free of all checks and restraints. Concepts become dogmas, and where there is dogma there is eventually mental and spiritual tyranny. I am religious but not devout. I consider myself an independent liberal. I mention these things merely to show from what point of view I myself regard this whole discussion.

I do not agree with Mr. Sillen's statement that Mr. De Voto's book "interrupted the stupor into which criticism had fallen," because I do not agree that criticism had fallen into a stupor. There has been a great deal of brilliant literary criticism of late, and a statement like that by Mr. Sillen is merely a generality not particularly glittering. In general Mr. Sillen seems to me to have too pat a phrase for many things. I do not know whether this is a personal idiosyncrasy, or bears any relationship to the exercise of Marxian dialectic. I merely know that it seems to me too slick.

It is easy to say in a large way that this or that is so, without by any means proving it. And that also, in my opinion, has been Mr. De Voto's trouble. I lived through the 1920's. I lived through a good deal of drinking and nonsense in the 1920's. Yet the 1920's will always remind me of contact with some of the most brilliant and fertile minds I have ever met; with some great spirits; with literature both of superb classical elegance, and of exciting experiment. I think, for instance, in those two categories of Elinor Wylie and of John Dos Passos. Ordinary American life, in the same years, managed to produce, among other horrors, the masked Mongolian idiots of the Ku Klux Klan, and their political dominance. However culpable the literati may have been, in Benny De Voto's opinion, they never produced anything like that! A book might be written about "The Fallacy Concerning the Average American," without negating all the fine, sturdy qualities, and the common sense, that my brother, for instance, found in the average American. I have met, in my travels, average Americans everywhere. Some I thought as grand people as you could meet anywhere, and some I have thought—well, let us not go into that.

I think Mr. Sillen is right when he says that Mr. De Voto, intentionally or unintentionally, has encouraged the philistine fallacy "that literature is an aberration of the contemporary American scene." I have had an illustration recently. Unfortunately at this writing I am away from my apartment and cannot check details by my files, but a writer of signed editorials in an Oklahoma paper (of course violently anti-administration also) perpetrated a vicious attack on most of the American writers of any worth as realists, obviously taking his text from *The Literary Fallacy*. As he was an ignorant yokel, he exaggerated and garbled anything Mr. De Voto may have said, but unfortunately Benny had given him a text from which to preach, and thereby to spread more prejudice, ignorance, and confusion in the hinterland. That is the kind of harm, in my view, that *The Literary Fallacy* has done.

Helen West Heller

I HAVE worked under Mr. De Voto on *The Saturday Review of Literature* when he was editor, in a cordial and friendly relationship. That was slightly before he began to have a messiah complex. He is, in general, a "good guy," and can be a brilliant writer. He wrote the best piece about Boston's banning of Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit* that I have read anywhere. He is by no means a reactionary or an unintelligent man. But I entirely agree with Mr. Sillen when he says, "It is nonsense to say that a whole body of writing so alive, vigorous and essentially realistic in spirit as that of the 1920's and 1930's was a vast falsification of American society."

It most certainly *is* nonsense, and entirely unworthy of Mr. De Voto's intellect.

Naturally I do not agree with Mr. De Voto's continuing and unmitigated attack upon Van Wyck Brooks, as Mr. Brooks happens not only to be one of my best friends, but the friend of all progressive causes and a man of great intelligence and humanity. His books on the literature of New England are a permanency in our writing of this century.

Mr. Sillen says some good things. When he says that in the era of Republican presidents the "country had retreated, under Republican auspices, into a fantastic isolationism against which many writers reacted with a rootless cosmopolitanism" he is stating the exact truth. "Normalcy" was always an idiot word and an idiot slogan. There is no such word and there is no such state of being. But don't forget, either, that that illiterate "normalcy" was just exactly what the majority of Americans wanted at that particular time! If they hadn't desired it they would not have had it. They

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were in a state of profound political apathy. They wanted to "live," not to think—as though you could live without thinking!

When Mr. Sillen dismisses T. S. Eliot as a "wastelander" and James Branch Cabell as a "sentimentalist" he is being what I call "slick." The characterizations are convenient rather than accurate. There is a great deal more to be said. And when he progresses dialectically into a statement such as "literary creation is not a merely (not merely an?) individual act, but a social act," he is "merely" developing a thesis. "Writing became purposeful." That sentence means nothing. Writing has always been "purposeful." (*What a word!*) And that means nothing. The writing of Mr. Witherow, former chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers, was *purposeful* enough.

And a thing that makes me see red still, is this business of the "ivory tower." For the good Lord's sake let us *forget* the ivory tower! You would think a man could write well only if he were digging a ditch! Which, again, is nonsense. I hate these *cliches*. They darken counsel. Some people need detachment in which to write. Some people write fantasy. Some use the imaginations God gave them. Just because they do that, they are not "defending the cause of slavery, of arbitrary government, of monopoly, of the oppressor."

Also I think it would have been better had Mr. Sillen resisted his impulse to take a side-crack at Mr. Malcolm Cowley, in a private spat between the NEW MASSES and the *New Republic*, a spat in which the general reader has no interest. It is out of place in his article. He is fairly right that the best of American literature for twenty years "has been an opposition literature critical of the dominant currents of American life." I hope that this may continue. There is plenty to criticize today. As to the "affirmative literature," it was exemplified by a man who wrote without fear or favor —who happened by chance to be my brother. Stephen Vincent Benet established the "affirmative literature" of our time in America. He did it by being honest. A business publicist once admitted that Steve had more accurately stated the case for the American businessman than he (the publicist) had ever been able to do. Incidentally Steve stated the case for all sorts and conditions of Americans! It isn't my book, and I get nothing from it, so I will simply say in closing that in this connection you could do a lot worse than read a small volume—in physical size, not in content—recently published, called *America*.

WILLIAM ROSE BENET.

SAMUEL SILLEN is to be congratulated on his provocative essay, "Challenge of Change." It's time somebody found something to say about the alleged critical beer-hall table-thumping of Bernard De Voto, and the sanctimonious breast-thumping of Van Wyck Brooks and Archibald MacLeish. The doctrines propounded by this "coalition" seem to me silly in their lack of any historical perspective, reactionary in their implications, and dangerous in their possible influence on the younger generation of writers. You can't create a literature by fiat and we had as good a literature in the twenties and thirties as our then national behavior deserved—in some instances, a damn sight better. "Moral and spiritual unpreparedness," my eye! All of a sudden, looking backwards, American writers, with scant tradition of leadership and scantier national acceptance, are blamed for not having been high priests, inspired readers of the clouded crystal ball. "Death wish" there may have been in some of our writing, but to say this was disintegrating on national morale is to put the cart before the horse. It's all horribly a little like Hitler's one time art exhibit, with the nice, healthy, nationalistic Aryan art in the big plush room, and the bad, wicked, decadent, non-Aryan art in the doghouse. If our younger writers, when they return from the war, take the rantings of Mr. De Voto, the regrets of Mr. Brooks, and the confessionals of Mr. MacLeish seriously, what a nice namby-pamby mess of a postwar literature we shall have. Fortunately, there is little likelihood of that.

EDWIN SEAVER.

SAMUEL SILLEN's stimulating and provocative article, "The Challenge of Change," called forth by Bernard DeVoto's *The Literary Fallacy*, is in itself a challenge and one that is greatly needed at this time. Primarily, it challenges us

What Shall the Army Read?

BANNING books for flimsy reasons has never been common in this country, although there have been a number of instances of such practices. The latest is an order from the Adjutant General of the US Army, who has decided that certain books, scheduled for early release by the Council on Books in Wartime, should not be distributed to our armed forces. According to him, they violate a section of the Soldier's Vote Bill—Title V, to be exact —which goes something like this: "Books containing political argument or political propaganda of any kind designed or calculated to affect the results of a federal election" are not to be distributed to the armed forces by the Army or Navy. Under that ruling they cannot be made available at "Army hospitals, libraries, service clubs, messes, and United Service Organizations, the Red Cross, and other volunteer agencies . . . operating at Army installations. . . ."

Right now, the banned book list under Title V includes *Yankee from Olympus*, a biography of Justice Holmes, by Catherine Bowen; *Slocum House*, by Mari Sandoz, a story of early Nebraska; Charles Beard's *The Republic*, a Beard history of the United States; and a book of essays, *One Man's Meat*, by E. B. White, most of which have appeared in the *New Yorker*. It is very doubtful that any of these would influence a soldier to run not walk (even if he could find a ballot) to cast a vote for either our Commander-in-Chief or the Albany Dick Tracy. The danger in this kind of censorship goes deeper. Apparently, under these circumstances, "political propaganda of any kind designed . . . to affect the result of a federal election" can be construed to mean almost anything. It could and might include books about our Allies—Russia, Great Britain, China, and all the rest of the United Nations. It could, under these standards, be applied to almost any novel or short story. Which means it is possible that our armed forces could—and might—be deprived by the Army and Navy, under Title V, of almost every book of any kind.

The Council for Books in Wartime in the past nine months has printed in cooperation with the Special Services Divisions of the Army Service Forces and the Bureau of Naval Personnel, some 22,000,000 volumes. The books are pocket size and the fighting forces of the USA have everywhere expressed their enthusiasm for the kind of convenient reading material to which they have had access. The Council is an organization which sees the necessity for a "free literature" and has sent a resolution protesting the Adjutant General's decision to the President, the Postmaster General, the Secretaries of War and Navy, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate. It would be good for every reading American to make himself heard likewise. Our men, who are now in the midst of a crucial offensive, learned to read before they learned to fight—for the right —among other things—to continue reading.

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to set our ideas straight with regard to the relation of literature to life in the period "between two wars," with especial emphasis, placed by Professor De Voto in his attack, on the formative formlessness of the 1920's. The thing, however, goes much deeper than this; and in the end we are challenged to define the relation of the writer and his art, not merely to the social organism of which they are a part, but to the *process* by which that organism is changed.

It is at this point that I would take issue with at least one of Dr. Sillen's formulations. In general, I agree with his admirable demolition of the pompous De Voto, who, like the famous Herr Duehring, does not hesitate to rifle the ideological luggage of his betters, only to hurl back at them the articles he has filched. I may say in passing that I think the dangerous socially reactionary direction of the De Voto brand of thinking, which in the end would relegate literature to the position of one of life's useless, ornamental and amusing adjuncts, might have been more stressed. This is in reality the old upperclass *Kinderstube* or "*bel bambino*" theory of art; it is merely another apartment in the historic Ivory Tower. From another aspect it is a lineal descendant of that moralistic philistinism with regard to the place of art in the "republic" which was manifested by Plato and Socrates and which has found constant echo down the ages. Only such a doctrine today, in the light of world development, takes on a new and far more sinister coloration. To perceive this we have but to look at the role which fascism assigns to literature: in the earlier, Mussolini stage, that of an activity which must remain innocuous and have nothing whatsoever to do with social questions; and later, under Hitler and the National Socialists, that of a socially useless one which must be made useful for propaganda purposes.

This comes out clearly when an occasional apologist for fascism, from abroad or here at home, speaks up to defend the "New Order" against the charge of cultural barbarism. After all, so runs this type of reasoning, what if a non-essential department of life such as literature does have to suffer while the (Nazi) "revolution" is in progress? If space permitted, quotations on this head might be adduced, ranging from Dr. Goebbels to Mr. Burton Rascoe.

But I definitely disagree with Dr. Sillen when he makes the following statement: "There could not be a flourishing literature of hope in that earlier world for the simple reason that a literature of hope and a social program of hopelessness cannot coexist." In the first place, it seems to me, this is to deny the part which the writer, and in general, thought—the human intellect—plays in changing the world. It is true that material reality precedes and shapes our thinking, but the latter in turn reacts upon and gives new direction to that reality. If this were not so, if the thinking of men did not anticipate political and governmental programs of hopefulness, there would, simply, be no social progress. What of the Encyclopedists, the Rousseaus, and other progressive, forward-looking writers in eighteenth century France under the last of the Bourbons? What of the first Utopian socialists? What of the founders of scientific socialism, themselves? What of our own early abolitionists? What of Maxim Gorky and other pioneer Russian socialist writers?

THE fact of the matter is, our writers of the twenties did have both a great democratic tradition behind them and a great program before them, under their very noses. Theirs was a tradition of national liberty and human freedom which may be traced from a Philip Freneau of American Revolutionary days down through a Bryant, an Emerson, a Thoreau, a Whittier, and the mighty, climactic Whitman to a Carl Sandburg, who in this very era was keeping alive that same tradition with his songs of the common man and the common man's America, past and present. (Why did our poets turn to Eliot instead of Sandburg?) Politically, there was the legacy of Paine, Jefferson, Lincoln, John Brown, the Molly Maguires, Haymarket, Debs, Bill Haywood, and the IWW, and, most recent of all, Randolph Silliman Bourne and John Reed. Was not this tradition in itself sufficient to provide a "program"? Was it so weak that it could offer no antidote to the despair of our young intellectuals of the time—those who, for example, thirty of them in all, published in 1922 the symposium, *Civilization in the United States?*

So much for the tradition behind them, upon which they might have drawn, as one or two lonely souls among them did —Mike Gold and Carl Sandburg, to name a couple of them. As for a program, had not the Russian Revolution occurred in 1917, vividly brought home to Americans by John Reed? Were there not, in America, a Marxist movement and a Communist Party? Had not more than a dozen national-liberation and proletarian revolutions taken place in Europe and Asia during the years immediately following World War I? Did all this, combined with our own glorious native tradition, mean nothing to our writers and intellectuals when they looked at the man in the White House of that day—a Harding, a Silent Cal, or that Great Engineer of disaster, Herbert Hoover? Was the state of the nation sufficient justification for their throwing overboard or forgetting their democratic-revolutionary inheritance and the gifts of the *Zeitgeist*, as they fled to Paris' Left Bank, sought a desolate consolation in Mr. Eliot's *Waste Land*, or

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amused themselves by baiting the Babbitts and the "booboisie" at home?

Dr. Sillen's statement, as I see it, comes close to giving the writers of this period a clean bill of health, or at any rate, affords them an excuse, and of this I cannot approve. And I speak not alone from a theoretical standpoint, but as one who, in the capacity of literary journalist on both sides of the Atlantic during this epoch, had numerous opportunities for first-hand, and occasionally behind-the-scenes, observation. This is not to fall into the De Voto fallacy of exalting the era as a "rugged, lively, and vital" one while condemning the men of letters for failing to live up to it. It is simply to point out that there was here a certain "treason of the intellectuals," even though not precisely of the sort envisaged by M. Julien Benda. Naturally, one would not expect the writer of the twenties to have had the vision of Teheran or even that which came with the great upward surge of the 1930's, in connection with the fight against the deepening economic crisis and the gathering forces of world fascism. But one might expect him to have been conscious of his country's deepest spiritual tradition and not to have permitted himself to be overwhelmed by the Hardings, the Coolidges, the Hoovers, and the society and forms of social organization for which they stood.

WHAT, then, lay behind this desertion on the part of American intellectuals of the 1920's; how is it to be explained? The era of false prosperity in which they lived was a prevailingly gaudy, superficial, brassy-sounding one which seemed to invite to cynicism and despair as the only way out for the honest, self-respecting beholder; but as Dr. Sillen admits, this was not the whole picture; there were also progressive forces and impulses at work. Why did the latter go unheeded by the majority of writers, while it was the static and reactionary elements of our national life that set the tone for the decade? The answer is doubtless not a simple one and is certainly not to be set forth in a few lines of type. There was the deep-going disillusionment of the imperialist war, with the Dadaistic despair of the young European being reflected among us in a hyper-estheticism (T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *The Sacred Wood* and a magazine like *The Dial*) the general direction of which was, at once, away from life and away from democracy—did not Eliot proclaim Hitler's creed of racial intolerance five years before the Nazi seizure of power? There was, further, the uprooting effect of the war on many intellectuals, leading to an expatriate or "exile" movement from American shores, and reflected on the domestic scene by a novel like *Main Street*. What, for instance, had become of that deeply sincere native-root-seeking movement which had centered about the *Seven Arts Magazine* when the century was in its late teens? In addition to a snobbish preciosity and not too discerning artistic modernism on the one hand and, on the other hand, a cheap and flagrant literary commercialism, there was the anarchistic, essentially undemocratic misleadership of the young—and of their elders who had never grown up—by H. L. Mencken and his followers.

There are, in short, a number of explanations which may be found; but how far do they excuse the writer, the intellectual? When all is said, the basic explanation appears to me to be that the man of letters, save for Sandburg and a few others, had lost his revitalizing contact with the people. Here again this is not to come back to the De Voto thesis; for such a contact informs the writer that literature, while it makes no pretense to embodying or reflecting the whole of a culture, is nonetheless a highly significant and indeed indispensable part of that culture of the social structure which it represents. Ilya Ehrenburg has told us that, in the Soviet Union, literature is "a phenomenon of which there is talk far and wide." It is an affair of the people, of the masses, and the writer is, in Stalin's superb phrase, an "engineer of souls," or, in Ehrenburg's, a "builder of life." He has become, in other words, a responsible individual.

It was not until the "Fourth Decade" with its tremendous stresses that American writers in any considerable number made this discovery of the true relation of literature to life. Having made it, they are not likely, the best of them, to forget it. In the growing dawn of Teheran a new transition awaits them now: from no-saying to yes-saying; but while some of them, due to old mental habits, may find difficulty in effecting the passage at once, those who are close to the American people and their Great Tradition, and, thereby, to the common man of earth, will speedily accomplish it. That is something the De Votos would never understand.

Meanwhile, let us hold the writer to the high responsibility that is his; which means that we must neither gloss over his past failures nor lose our faith in him or in his art on account of those failures.

SAMUEL PUTNAM.

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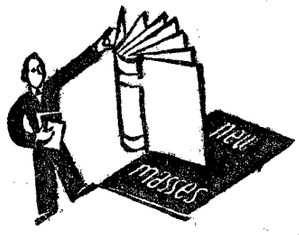

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—somehow, in this reviewer's mind, the old phrase, "years which the locust hath eaten," kept coming back as he read through this volume with its songs to Guernica, to Lidice, to Sevastopol, to Stalingrad, to the Dnieper Dam, to Wake Island, its elegies for Federico Garcia Lorca (four of the seven contributors treat of this theme), its poems on the Spanish War, on Nazi atrocities, on the Partisans and the underground, on the Jew and the Negro.

These were indeed locust years in terms of wasted human lives; but that, after all, does not express it. They were years of unspeakable horror and violence; and the thing that we are to remember is that an entire generation grew to maturity in such a world as this. What we have in the *Seven Poets*, accordingly, is an anguished quest for the meaning of it all, a search that is perfectly natural on the part of free-born youth with a tradition of liberty and democracy behind them. Four of the poets, Joy Davidman, Aaron Kramer, Martha Millet, and Norman Rosten, belong distinctly to the generation of Spain and Munich, while the other three, Maxwell Bodenheim, Langston Hughes, and Alfred Kreymborg, are older writers with a fund of memories and experience out of the 1920's. It may be well to keep this in mind, for it will be of interest to compare the two groups. This is not to say that the older ones have lost anything of their militant awareness or their fire, as is shown by Hughes' "Good Morning, Stalingrad," Kreymborg's "They Are Not Yet Dead," or Bodenheim's "A Sister Writes." It is simply that—well, it is hard to put into words, but it seems to me that there is, perhaps, somewhat less of startled poignancy in their work, that peculiar hurt which is felt by youth rudely and suddenly confronted with a world in flames. They are truly veterans in the struggle, with all the foresight and courage which that implies, and if they have not grown weary, they have, on the other hand, acquired that saddening wisdom which only the seasoned warrior knows.

All in all it was a happy idea, juxtaposing thus the older and the younger poets of the anti-fascist cause; and this is but one phase of a superb job of editing by Mr. Thomas Yoseloff.

It is worth noting that each of the younger contributors has a poem on Lorca. This is significant. Stood against the wall at dawn by a fascist firing-squad, Garcia Lorca has become a symbol for young poets everywhere, a symbol at once of the terrible menace which threatens their world and of the fight which they must wage if that world is to be made safe for poetry and for living. Possibly it was this which led Shaemas O'Sheel in his introductory note to observe that these and other poets of their kind well might learn "to postpone the threnody and sound the clarion call." This is sound advice on the whole; but as one of the authors has remarked to me, it is to be kept in mind that practically all of the pieces in this volume were written before the Moscow and Teheran conferences, and all of them, of course, before D-Day, and he adds that the collection should be judged on the basis of what it contains and not what the reviewer might wish it to contain. Certainly, however, one is justified in pointing out, as Mr. O'Sheel does, the path which lies ahead.

As a matter of fact, if we look closely enough, we shall be able to find the transition already in progress. Beyond Guernica and Lidice and Sevastopol there are the indomitable Partisans; there are the heroes of this war; there is the mighty footfall of the peoples as expresesd in Aaron Kramer's "United Nations Cantata"—and Mr. Kramer, incidentally, is the youngest poet of the lot:

The nations are marching. Listen!
The ground awakes to their thud.
See how the banners glisten!
banners woven with blood.
Saluting the sun they've risen
like a flowering field in June.
The nations are marching. Listen!
What mighty music at noon!

What is that if not a "clarion call"? And beyond the battle is the vision that Alfred Kreymborg brings us in his "Ballad of the Common Man":

And rear your temple all around
Our common feet and common ground,
Giving our love a common sound—
Build, O men, keep building!

It seems to me that I find a significance for the new time in Norman Rosten's "Poem for Construction," on the theme of TVA:

For a moment, before darkness comes on,
With armies poised on the plains,
let us recognize this giant instinct
which will one day be our own,
mastery of earth, arm, and brain.

Even Lorca is not dead, but shall live again, as Joy Davidman puts it in her "Elegy":

He was born in the morning
and by nightfall he was a dead man;
he was reborn today
and tomorrow he will be born again;
he who is not dead will be reborn
daily with the rising sun.

For the end is in sight, as foreseen in Langston Hughes' "The Underground":

You Nazis, Fascists, headsmen,
Appeasers, liars, Quislings,
You will be washed away,
and the land will be fresh and clean again,

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Denuded of the past—
For time will give us
Our spring
At last.

Today, in Maxwell Bodenheim's words,

we march as one man to defeat
The soulless, driven massing of our foes.

But we choose to believe with Martha Millet that tomorrow will see

A green increase
Of love's enduring pillars, filling sky
With blossoms sprung from peril's mastery,

Fed by a ceaseless stream of countless hearts
Whose beat was stilled that morning might be won.

Perhaps these poets, after all, *have* found the answer without quite being aware of it.

SAMUEL PUTNAM.

Our Arctic Outpost

ALASKA AND THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST: OUR NEW FRONTIER, *by Harold Griffin. W. W. Norton. $2.75.*

THERE was a time when the frontier was defined as the zone of settlement moving across the North American continent from east to west. Within this conception Alaska, although its first white settlers arrived from Siberia before the American Revolution, was considered by Americans on the Atlantic seaboard as the last geographic frontier open to settlement. Alaska still wants settlers today. But our new frontier, as refreshingly described by Mr. Griffin, is not simply an expanding zone of settlement.

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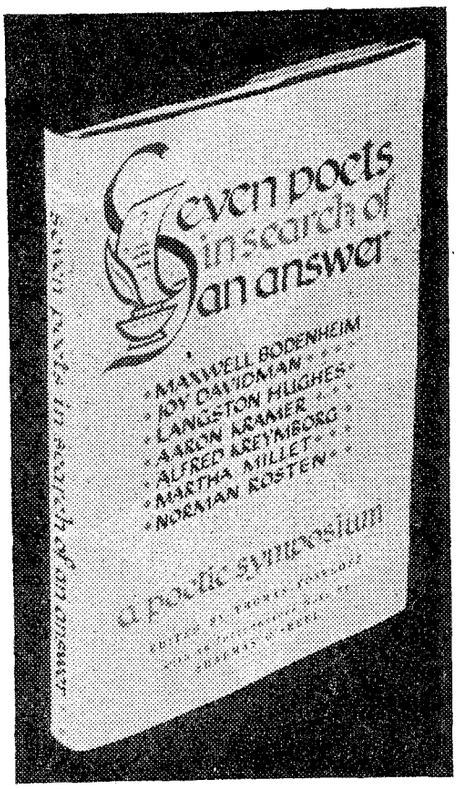

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Air travel has indeed opened the horizon on the future, most of all in the earth's remoter spots. Even from an atoll in the Pacific no place on earth is more than sixty flying hours away. What is more significant for Alaska and the Canadian Northwest is that the necessary airfields have been established, with the new Alaskan highway as a permanent fuel supply line to service this division on one global airline of the future. It is no longer a dream, but an unquestioned reality.

Apart from a clear vision of the new air frontier, Harold Griffin gives us real insight into limiting features on the social horizon. Many years before the war the separation of oil from sands was practically demonstrated, and the Athabaska oil sands contain deposits estimated as high as 250 billion barrels; but their development was long delayed because large oil concerns kept the field in reserve, withholding the Canadian oil from the world market. Likewise certain American politicos, having oil interests in Pennsylvania, oppose large-scale development of Alaskan oil, even for use in Alaska where it is sorely needed. Another example is tin, which Alaska consumes in enormous quantities in the form of canned goods and for fish canning purposes. Yet local Alaskan tin deposits have been neglected because a big northern output would disturb marketing of the output from mines in South America. In the present crisis, however, the compelling needs of national defense in northwestern America have been overwhelming. More progress has been made in the past few years than in decades before. Yet the path of progress is no more rose-strewn today than in the nineteenth century. Twentieth-century pioneers, eager to develop the new frontier, face formidable pitfalls; and Mr. Griffin has done a service in pointing out clearly what they are: self-seeking interests unmindful of the future general welfare in Alaska and the Canadian Northwest.

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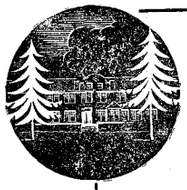

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Louis Pasternak, Mgr.

report by a man who has traveled widely throughout the area and who tells how the new Alaskan highway and the Canol pipeline were built. The reader is constantly captivated by the breezily told anecdotes, each turning up some new facet of the ever changing life on the new frontier. There is, for example, the sixty-year-old prospector who, after a lifetime in the woods, beholds the new developments only to say laconically, "Guess I was born forty years too soon." JOSEPH SIMONS.

FILMS

BY NOW, the preeminence of the US Army Signal Corps in the field of information films is an old story. With the first crack out of the box, Capra's *Prelude to War*, the army technician-artists set a standard of accomplishment that no other film groups in this country or abroad, as far as I have been able to ascertain, have surpassed. Succeeding films aegissed by the Signal Corps—*The Nazis Strike, Divide and Conquer, The Battle of Britain, The Battle for the Aleutians, The Battle of Russia,* the as yet unreleased *Battle for China, The Negro Soldier at War*—if anything, hiked up the Corps' claim to undisputed leadership in the documentary genre. Their latest film, *Attack, The Battle for New Britain,* now playing at three Broadway theaters and to be released to the neighborhoods next month, is no whit inferior to its predecessors. It will not surprise me if many other filmgoers join me in placing this picture at the very top of the Signal Corps list.

From a formal point of view *Attack* comes closest to John Huston's *Battle for the Aleutians*. With the exception of *The Negro Soldier at War,* the remaining films mentioned above are brilliantly editorialized compilations of library shots which achieve their ends through a kind of crash and shock. Massed heavy artillery, you might say, pouring it on overwhelmingly. *Attack* is more intimate, interior, personally revealing. *Attack,* like *The Aleutians,* also possesses the tremendous advantage that its footage is on-the-spot stuff. As a result the peculiar anonymity that characterizes even the best compilations is nowhere present. The face of *Attack,* affirmative, aware, sensitive, is its own.

It is difficult to refrain from giving special mention to the camera coverage of the picture. You've never seen anything like it, from the point of view of both completeness and understanding. It wasn't the question of the number of cameras the army had around, we feel. Though that helps, of course. You can't praise sufficiently the thought and planning that went into

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Lieut. Col. Robert Presnell's set-up for covering the operations on New Britain. That must have been logistics with a vengeance. But cameras don't a picture make, as the saying goes. It's all in eyes and heart and mind of the boys behind the eye-piece. And they had what it takes. To all concerned in the bringing to life of *Attack*, I must single out Robert Presnell especially—he directed and edited—for my deepest respect and thankfulness. You must attend.

WE LIKED *Two Girls and a Sailor* (MGM, screen play by Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman, directed by Richard Thorpe, Joe Pasternack producer) well enough not to want to oversell it. Because a considerable amount of over-selling has been going on. When something so enjoyable in its own terms comes along, why kill it all with supermerchandising? For example, any number of pressmen have whooped it up over the *Two Girls and a Sailor's* ingenious (in quotes) story line. Judge for yourself. The Deyo Sisters (June Allyson and Gloria De Haven), theater kids who learned to read from *Variety*, set up a sort of USO in their home. Strays into same a young sailor (Van Johnson). Since he doesn't flash his check book, how could they tell he had millions of millions? Unbeknownst he buys them an enormous canteen (read: the MGM lot). First he loves one, then t'other. Ring out those bells. Curtain. Ingenious? Different? Nothing of the sort. But a good show, yes. Schnozzle Durante is especially delightful. His old routines still click for this viewer. And he still can carry off a malapropism like no one else in the business. I could get along very well without the Messrs. Iturbi, Coates, Gracie Allen collaboration—*Concerto For One Finger*—all right, all right, and the adulatory, tasteless *Young Man With a Horn* (Harry James) episode. But there's enough left to make a half-dollar's worth.

There's not a dishonest bone in Republic's *Man From Frisco*. A modest film of minor budget, it gets places nevertheless. You'll approve of it. The film, you might say, is a kind of melo-documentary, forthright and solid in its structure. When you get through with it you've really been given a decent look-see into what is this thing—prefabrication of ships, the Henry Kaiser way. And the plot is not a deterrent to your understanding. Michael O'Shea, who turns in a very presentable job of Kaisering, blows into an old shipbuilding town and proceeds to turn it inside out. Ships must go down fast and old methods must too. Some feelings get hurt. You can't prefabricate good human relations, it seems. O'Shea learns and the ships get built. It seems to me that *Man From Frisco* comes closer than any film of its size has heretofore to striking a thorough-

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ly wholesome, useful home-morale attitude. For once, the home front has not been made the pretext for the traipsing of Miss Ann Miller and her twinkling toes. Though her toes, mind you, are of a high estate. *Frisco's* book is by Ethel Hill and Arnold Manoff. Robert Florey directed. Other featured players are Anne Shirley, Gene Lockhart, Anne Shoemaker, Dan Duryea.

JAMES MCCLOUGH.

Jews and Negroes Unite

"NEGRO Salute to the Fighting Jews of Europe," recently presented at Town Hall under the auspices of the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists, and Scientists, is another victory on the home front over Hitler's famous weapon, "divide and conquer."

It is very fitting that the two largest minorities in America should unite and stage such a meeting at the time when the Allies are advancing from east, west, and south. Long among the front ranks of the most consistent anti-fascists, the Jews and the Negroes are at this time uniting on the battlefields of Europe, in the fighting front ranks, to pierce fascism at its heart.

Sitting there in Town Hall, listening to the high tributes paid to Negroes by Jews and to Jews by Negroes—praise of their heroic dead, glorious history, and their culture—you saw the strengthening of a bond between two oppressed minorities with a common burden; you saw a path for other minorities to follow. You saw a guarantee of the complete annihilation of fascism and revenge for its atrocities—a common victory for a people's peace.

A heartwarming evidence of the evening's meaning was the presentation of two scrolls—the Dorie Miller scroll, given by Rabbi Leonard Greenberg to Rev. Adam Clayton Powell, and the Meyer Levin scroll, presented by Owen Dodson to Albert Kahn. From the Dorie Miller scroll, Rabbi Greenberg read: "Jew and Negro pledge their lives, hands, and all, to fight for freedom and the realization of Teheran." And the Reverend Mr. Powell accepted it with pledges to dedicate his life fighting for the abolition of second class citizenship for both peoples, and for a democratic world. Owen Dodson read one of his own poems, written after watching a Jewish pageant in Chicago some months ago, and Mr. Kahn called for greater unity between both peoples and with anti-fascist fighters everywhere.

Entertainment was provided by an all-Negro group, which included Muriel Smith, Luther Saxon, and Glen Bryant of Carmen Jones; Teddy Wilson and his band, Josh White, Canada Lee, and others. Their songs reflected a determined and serious note. The meeting as a whole was living proof that other such gatherings should be held everywhere—now.

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The kids in Russia, who live on a few ounces of cereal a day. **They've never seen an ice-cream soda.**

The Polish boys and girls, who would be in school right now, just as we are . . . **if there were any schools left.**

The French youths who've never had a hamburger when they were out on a date—or any other time, for that matter. They are old, very old . . . **older than you and I ever will be** . . .

There are millions of them . . . in Norway . . . Holland . . . Denmark . . . Belgium . . . They would stare in amazement if they could be here to see—

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A high-school senior, uncomfortable in his first tuxedo . . . calling for his date, looking nervous.

Millions of things that we take for granted . . .

There is such a feeling of permanency in our tight little world. We'll go to school with the gang, today . . . and tomorrow . . .

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